

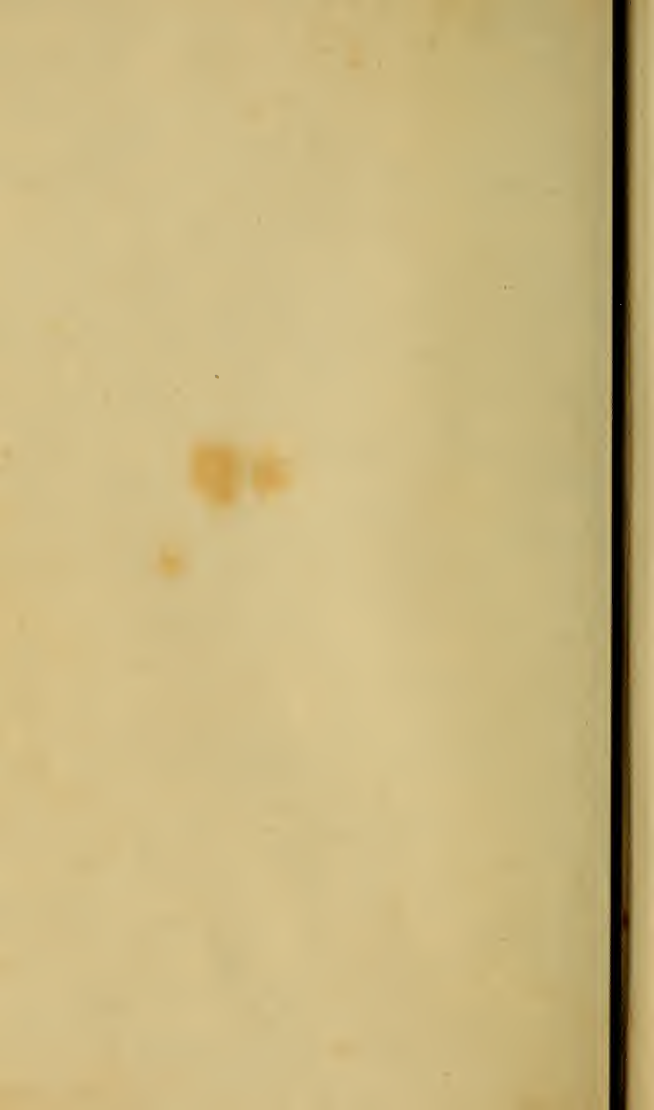


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Thomas F. Torrance











J. Peirman

W. Hewson

John Brown
AET 78.

BORN JULY 24th 1774 DIED FEB. 26th 1820.

LETTERS
ON
SANCTIFICATION,

BY THE LATE
REV. JOHN BROWN,
WHITBURN:

WITH A
MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER,
BY THE
REV. DAVID SMITH,
BIGGAR.

EDINBURGH:
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TO
THE UNITED ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION
OF WHITBURN,

THIS MEMORIAL OF THEIR
LATE VENERABLE AND BELOVED PASTOR
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

THE following pages are dedicated to the memory of a good man, a faithful and zealous minister, and an affectionate relative.

The biographical memoir was intended—with what success the design has been accomplished others must judge—to exhibit a full length portrait, though in miniature, of what Mr Brown actually was when alive, in his life, ministry, and character. The high reputation which Mr Brown sustained, and the public place which he occupied in the Christian world, seemed to require such an attempt; at least, it is conceived, they will justify it. The writer has only to regret that the task was not committed to abler and more experienced hands. It was always his own judgment and wish that it should have been undertaken by his highly esteemed relative, the Reverend Dr John Brown,

Edinburgh, whose superior knowledge and talents fitted him for doing ample justice to the character and memory of his venerable father. But as he imperatively devolved the work upon the writer of these pages, he has endeavoured, with his limited capacity, and comparatively scanty means of information, to do what he could.

The affectionate and impressive Address delivered at Mr Brown's funeral by his much esteemed friend and brother, the Reverend Mr Fleming, will be found an interesting and appropriate appendage to the Memoir. It was at one time intended to have added the Sermon preached to his congregation on the Sabbath after the funeral; but as this could not be done without swelling the volume to an inconvenient size, the design was relinquished.

The Letters on Sanctification were published some years ago, by Mr Brown himself, in the Christian Repository and Christian Monitor, from which they are now printed. The subject of them was always a very favourite one with him, and had occupied his attention for many years. He meant, had Providence spared his life a little longer, to have republished these Letters himself, and in a

more complete form. They need not the recommendation of such an obscure person as the writer. They form a portion of the works which will praise their author in the gate.*

A considerable and unexpected delay has taken place in the publication of these pages. But as the reasons are such as would be in no way inte-

* The plan and object of these letters will be best understood from the following note to the Editor of the Christian Repository, which preceded the first letter on its original publication: "SIR, It is generally known that it was Mr Hervey's intention to have added another volume to his "Theron and Aspasio," on the influence of his peculiar views of gospel doctrine on sanctification. His ill health and premature death prevented the execution of this design. Strongly persuaded that the gospel, as understood by Mr Hervey, is 'the doctrine according to godliness,' I have devoted some of my leisure hours to the composition of the inclosed letters, which, if they suit your journal, you are welcome to give to the public. How far they supply the *desideratum* others must determine. I have, at least, this consoling reflection,—I have meant well—I have done what I could. J. B. W." To account for the difference of style in these letters, from the extremely inartificial and simple garb in which Mr Brown usually clothed his thoughts, it is right to remark, that the letters were, with the exception of the sixth, at the author's request, rewritten by one of his sons,—but were subjected to a revision and correction by himself previously to their publication.

resting to the public, it is sufficient simply to advert to the fact.

As the writer had not an opportunity of correcting the press, there are a very few typographical errors, which the reader will be at no loss to discover and correct. There is one, however, which he seriously regrets, as it has had the effect of converting the statement of an indifferent fact into an imputation upon a respectable body of fellow-christians. In page 14, line 14, the word "seduce" is printed for the word "swell," which had been written.

DAVID SMITH.

BIGGAR, *March* 1834.

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MEMOIR.

BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE.

THE Reverend JOHN BROWN, the subject of this memoir, was the eldest son of the late Reverend John Brown, Haddington. He was born there July 24. 1754. His mother was Janet, daughter of Mr John Thomson, merchant in Musselburgh. By both his parents he enjoyed the privilege of an eminently Christian descent. His father's character and attainments are too well known and universally appreciated to require any particular reference to them here. Nor was he less happy in his mother, who appears to have been distinguished equally for the native kindliness of her dispositions, and the unaffected fervour of her piety. It is unnecessary to say how much he was indebted to the prayers, instructions, and example, of two such eminent saints. He was accustomed himself often to refer to them with the warmest expressions

of gratitude ; and there is little doubt, that, under God, they gave that particular cast to his character, and that direction to his pursuits, which they ever after retained. To the very end of his life, he never spoke of his mother but with great affection, nor of his father but with the highest veneration.

Of his early life little is remembered, save that, like Obadiah, "he feared the Lord from his youth." His venerable brother, the Reverend Ebenezer Brown, Inverkeithing, says, " I recollect that, at an early period of life, he shewed a regard for the society of the aged and the pious. Often while I was sporting with boys in the street, he was engaged in religious conversation and in prayer with them. He manifested, too, a tender regard for truth. Both my father and I would have sometimes smiled when, on mentioning a fact, he would have said, "Such was the case, at least I think so." A similar testimony to his juvenile piety is given by an intimate friend, who says, " He began very early to associate with the religious characters of his father's congregation, particularly with those who were advanced in life. By the amiableness of his natural temper, and the simplicity of his manners, he was much esteemed by them, and his company not a little courted. It would appear, that, from the early turn of his mind to things of a religious nature, he never had much predilection for the innocent sports of youth, and, of course, was never known to excel in any of them." In a let-

ter to a young friend, he himself mentions incidentally, that, when about fourteen years of age, he and the late Reverend Mr Sheriff of Tranent, whom he often in his letters refers to as "the friend of his youth," were in the habit of meeting together for prayer, a practice which he was ever forward to encourage among the young, from the recollection, there is little doubt, of the benefit he derived from it himself. He was accustomed also, at this early period, to attend at Dalkeith, Stow, and other places, at the administration of the Lord's Supper, and with sensible pleasure and profit to his soul. He used often, in after life, to speak with much interest of these occasions, and of Mr Hutton and the other old ministers who officiated. He refers to his religious experience in these days of his youth (a very unusual thing with him, for he was naturally very reserved upon this topic) in the following terms, when writing to a friend :—"It is long since when a boy, that word 'Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide,' was made very sweet to me, and I have often seen it performed." From the manner in which he frequently spoke of Boston, his family were led to conclude, that the writings of that distinguished divine, and especially his View of the Covenant of Grace, were among the first books which engaged his youthful attention, and determined and fixed his religious views. He intimates himself indeed as much as this in the following extract from a letter written in the latter part of his life: "I was early," he says, "initiated into Bos-

ton's writings, and have still the highest esteem of them ; as a divine he was one of the glories of Scotland."

He was early sent to the University, probably when he was little more than fourteen years of age ; but his father prudently provided against the dangers to which one at his tender and unsuspecting age is in such a situation exposed, by placing him under the care of a person of judgment, experience, and piety. He lodged, when at College, with Mr John Murray, a brother-in-law of the Rev. Mr Pattison's, and father of the distinguished chemist of the same name. Though originally employed in the humble occupation of a shepherd, this good man was greatly distinguished by his extensive and accurate knowledge of theology, as well as by his eminent piety. His affectionate mother lived to see her promising son advanced thus far, but died before he had finished his course of academical study. In a note to him, dated in 1771, the year in which she died, she says, " Dear Johnny,— Youth is a precious time, let it not slip without being concerned that Christ be yours, and you his." This, which proved her dying counsel, was, there is every reason to believe, strictly complied with. Amid his literary avocations, and he was too conscientious to be inattentive to these, religion was still the chief concern. In referring to that period, it was observed, that he had always more to say about Mr Pattison's sermons than the Professor's lectures. Of some of the former there are still pre-

served pretty large notes. He entered the Divinity Hall about the year 1772, but, respecting his appearance there, any more than at the College, there is nothing preserved. In some of his own letters, however, he mentions his reading and studying at this period, with great pleasure and instruction, Matthew Henry's Commentary, and Ebenezer Erskine's Sermons upon Faith, books upon which, along with Boston, his views as a theologian, and his manner as an expositor, were manifestly formed. His taste, especially in making Henry's Commentary his "*Student's Manual*," will hardly be called in question by any who recollect the high eulogium pronounced upon that extraordinary, and it may be added matchless, work, by the late Robert Hall of Bristol.

He received his license to preach the gospel from the Associate Presbytery of Edinburgh on May 21. 1776. While a probationer he preached with much acceptance in those parts of the Church which he was appointed to supply. The congregation of Wooler, in Northumberland, were disposed to call him, and did not do so, only, it is probable, in consequence of a call coming out for him from the newly formed, but larger, congregation of Whitburn. It may not be uninteresting to remark, in connexion with this last event, that his father decidedly and perseveringly opposed in the Presbytery the formation of that congregation, under the apprehension that it would seriously injure the neighbouring one of Bathgate, from which it was

a disjunction. He little thought that it was destined to be the sphere of his own son's labours for such a lengthened period. He afterwards, however, saw and acknowledged his error in the opposition he had given.

In the interval between the coming out of the call and his settlement at Whitburn, Mr Brown was appointed by the Associate Presbytery of Edinburgh to supply for six months the pulpit of the Reverend Archibald Hall, Well Street, London, who was then in a declining state of health, and labouring under the disease of which he died. This appointment he fulfilled, not only to the satisfaction of the congregation, but very much to his own comfort and advantage. While "watering others" by his preaching, he was, by means of Mr Hall's Christian society, and highly instructive conversation, "watered himself." He ever afterwards spoke of this period, as the most interesting and important season of his life. Mr Hall, as a divine, had few superiors in his day, and his stores of scriptural knowledge, and habits of original and accurate thinking, he judiciously made subservient to the edification of his young assistant and guest. It seems to have been his manner to render the social intercourse that passed between them the vehicle of communicating, in a natural and easy manner, directions as to the performance of pastoral duties, and instructions on the great subjects of doctrinal and practical theology. Often did Mr Brown refer to the high privileges he enjoyed when under

this estimable minister's roof. He could never, indeed, sufficiently express the obligation he was under to Mr Hall's kindness and conversation ; and, next to his own father, always spoke of Mr Hall as the person to whom he was most indebted for his religious knowledge. Aged and experienced ministers have it in their power to be exceedingly useful, by their conversation and advice, to those who are entering into the sacred office of the ministry. It was probably the recollection of the benefit which he had himself derived from this source, which made the subject of this memoir so attentive, as he always was, to preachers who happened to be lodging in his house. He invariably studied to promote their edification in the way at once of instructive conversation with them, and the recommending suitable books to them.

On his return from London, he was set apart, May 22. 1777, to the pastoral oversight of the Congregation of Whitburn, by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. The solemn work of the day was introduced by a sermon from the Reverend James Scott, Musselburgh, from 2 Cor. viii. 5, " And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." The Ordination Sermon was preached by the Reverend Mr Pattison, Edinburgh, from Acts xx. 24, " That I might finish the ministry which I have received of the Lord, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." After a solemn charge had been tendered both to minister

and people by Mr Pattison, the Reverend Mr Brown of Haddington, the venerable father of the young minister, concluded the sacred and interesting service by a sermon from Psalms cxxxii. 1-5, "I will not come within my house—till I find a place for the Lord." The extreme delicacy of his appearance at the time he was settled, occasioned many forebodings of his early removal. But it pleased God, "in whose hands our life is, and whose are all our ways," to disappoint these fears, and so to confirm and establish his health, as that, for nearly half a century, he was never laid aside from preaching by bodily indisposition.

At the period of his ordination he was only twenty-two years of age, and was even more juvenile in appearance than in reality; but with the years and appearance of youth, he united all the seriousness and a great deal of the rich religious experience of age. His preaching then, as well as afterwards, was peculiarly relished by the pious, who flocked to hear him at his own and other sacramental occasions. From notes taken by some of his hearers at this earliest period of his ministry, which are now before the writer of these pages, his discourses appear to have been then characterized by the very same qualities, in respect of doctrine, form, and style,—by the same richness in evangelical sentiment, to apply scriptural illustration, and sacred unction,—which distinguished them to the last; and as they were then aided by a voice which was always naturally sweet, and at that time pos-

sessed of considerable power and compass, in comparison of what it was afterwards, it is easy to conceive how generally acceptable his preaching must have been. The old people, accordingly, still mention with delight the texts from which they heard him preach in these early days, and speak with much emotion of the profit and enjoyment they experienced. Such numbers attended the neighbouring communions at which he assisted, that sometimes he had to preach to them in the open air, even in winter, amid the snow, the ordinary place of worship not being sufficient to contain them. The word of the Lord, though not rare, was certainly "precious in those days."

About two years after his ordination, he was united in marriage with Miss Isabella Cranstoun, the daughter of respectable and religious parents in Kelso, with whom he lived happily for the space of sixteen years. The following short sketch of her character, extracted from "Memoirs of Eminent Pious Women," is, I have the best reason to believe, only a just one. "In the new situation to which her marriage had introduced her, the God who had placed her in it enabled her to acquit herself in a manner highly respectable. Her behaviour indeed was singularly wise, and no doubt contributed to the acceptance and usefulness of her husband's labours. Her time was spent in a most inoffensive, quiet, prudent, and pious manner. She paid particular attention to the religious instruction both of her children and servants. In

religious conversation she took much pleasure. Having early acquired a taste for reading, the leisure she possessed was partly filled up with the perusal of good books, and like every saint she loved the habitation of God's house." Her death was in unison with her life—Christian—peaceful—happy. Of this marriage there were six children, the eldest and the youngest of whom, however, died in their infancy. The loss of his beloved partner in life, and the heavy and responsible charge of four motherless children, that in consequence devolved entirely upon him, affected Mr Brown very deeply. His nervous system received on this occasion a shock which those who remember what he was in his younger days, say it never completely recovered. But though he felt his loss thus keenly, as he had reason to do, and the more especially as his own peculiar habits singularly unfitted him for filling up to his children a mother's place, he bore it in a christian manner, converting the excellencies of his deceased partner into hallowed motives for the excitement of himself and his children to the practice of christian duty. Writing to one of his daughters some time after, he says, "Be as meek and patient in all cases as you can. This will greatly help both your health and comfort. Your mother now in glory was remarkable for these good qualities ; and they made her weak and afflicted life pass very happily. It is an honour to us all to imitate her, as she imitated Christ."

After continuing in a state of widowhood for two years, he entered again into the marriage relation. The person whom he selected as his second partner in life was Miss Agnes Fletcher, eldest daughter of the Reverend William Fletcher, Bridge of Teath, who, after living with him for thirty-four years and a half, now survives him as his afflicted widow. Respect for her feelings, and his own relation to her, forbid the writer saying what, in other circumstances, it would be highly proper to say respecting her unwearied devotedness to his comfort during the lengthened period of their union. He may be permitted, however, to state, that, in his second marriage, as well as in his first, Mr Brown was singularly happy. Of this second marriage he has left behind him a son and three daughters. It deserves to be mentioned here, that in both his marriages Mr Brown entirely overlooked those secular considerations which have such influence with men generally, and attended solely to the christian principle of "marrying only in the Lord."

After this event of his second marriage, his life and ministry proceeded in a very even tenor, no otherwise diversified than that of an active and laborious country minister's usually is, till the breaking out in the Secession Church of what is commonly called "the old light" controversy. This controversy turned not so much upon a point of theological doctrine, as upon the great principles of religious liberty. It took its rise in pre-

fixing a preamble to the Formula of Questions for Ordination, bearing, that, as some parts of the standard books of the Synod had been interpreted as favouring compulsory measures in religion, the Synod did not require from any candidate for license or ordination the approbation of any such principle ; and that, while the Synod held the obligations of the covenants upon posterity, they did not interfere with the controversy respecting the nature and kind of it. It was substantially, therefore, a controversy, whether or not the consciences of men were to be left free in religious matters, untrammelled by the fetters of human impositions, whether forged by civil or ecclesiastical power, and responsible for what they believed to God only. What is now considered as almost of the nature of an axiom in respect of its clearness, certainly was in those days the subject of a very keen controversy in most of the churches of the Secession, and, like most theological controversies, was envenomed by a pretty plentiful infusion of acrimony on both sides. Mr Brown's congregation was, in common with most other congregations, violently agitated by this keen dispute. The agitation indeed, in consequence of the local position which the congregation occupied, being in the immediate vicinity of two congregations who, with their ministers, left the Synod, was such as to threaten almost its dissolution. Mr Brown, however, though disqualified above most men for taking a part in subtle disputation or stormy debate,

was enabled, in very trying circumstances, to hold fast his integrity, and “possess his soul in patience.” His sentiments at this period of his life on the controverted points were what was termed “old light;” but he did not reckon the questions in dispute of such importance as to justify a separation from the Synod. It was his aim, while he maintained what he considered truth and a good conscience, “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Thus, in a letter upon this subject to some elders of his acquaintance, he says, “The Scriptures bid us ‘contend for the faith,’ and ‘strive for the faith of the Gospel;’ but they also bid us in ‘meekness instruct those that oppose themselves:’ they order us to ‘let our moderation be known unto all men;’ and they bid us ‘follow the gentleness of Christ.’ Follow peace with all men and holiness, is the injunction of the Prince of Peace. O if we could pray more about these things, and say less, it would be far better.” And what he recommended he practised. His people testify that he displayed singular temper, not returning railing for railing, nor ever desecrating the pulpit by the introduction of topics calculated “to gender strife rather than godly edifying.” His single object was to do all things, as far as possible, “without murmurings or disputings, holding forth the word of life;” and his Christian conduct met with its reward. His congregation appreciated the integrity and good temper he had invariably manifested, and, with comparatively

few exceptions, adhered to his ministry. An incident is mentioned illustrative of the disposition of the people at this period, which was creditable at once to them and to their minister. The first Sabbath on which worship was observed by the separating party within the bounds of his congregation was reckoned by both sides a very trying day, and one, likely, which might be decisive of the fate of the congregation. It was the hope of the one, and the fear of the other, that the regular place of worship would on that day be comparatively deserted. If, however, the friends of the separating party were not backward in using means to seduce the crowd which flocked to the *old light tent*, the friends of the minister and congregation were not less zealous in mustering their strength to encourage their pastor and one another. They not only made a point of being all present themselves in their places, but yoked their carts and brought out the infirm and the young, so that the church, instead of being emptier, was even fuller than usual. This proved decisive in favour of the congregation. The other party, indeed, continued to persevere, erected a place of worship, and at last, after some disappointments, succeeded in obtaining a very worthy young man to be their minister. Comparatively little impression, however, was made by this new erection upon Mr Brown's congregation, and the bitterness which the dispute engendered between the parties gradually subsided.

In the beginning of the year 1806, Mr Brown had the gratification of seeing his eldest son (now the Reverend John Brown, D.D., Broughton Place, Edinburgh) ordained to the office of the holy ministry, over the Associate Congregation, Biggar ; and, in the year after, his second son, the Reverend George Brown, over the Associate Congregation, North Berwick. But though, like the venerable apostle, “ he had no greater joy than to see his children walking in the truth,” and following, as ministers, and in the same church, in the footsteps of their father and grandfather, his solicitude that they should be found faithful and successful in the work of the Lord, was the predominant feeling on these occasions. The following extract from a letter he addressed to the first, immediately after his ordination, will show the holy concern he felt :

“ Dear Son,

“ As I had no occasion of offering my advice to you at your ordination, with respect to many things, I take this opportunity to advise. When God has set you among a respectable and loving people, I hope you will do your utmost as to their souls. Be deeply concerned about your own soul. This will fill you with concern for others. Read the Word of God much, and be regular and frequent in secret prayer. Be more acquainted with evangelical and practical divinity, such as Ebenezer Erskine’s, Dr Owen’s, Trail’s, &c. You cannot preach long without laying-in from

these stores. Also consult, and be acquainted with, your grandfather's works. Besides what you have, or can get from some of your people, I shall send you divinity books. Dress as neatly as you please in sermons, but let the matter be always solid and savoury. Be kind and affable to all. Be diligent among the young. You have a fair opportunity of doing good to all, and of enlarging a congregation already respectable. Always speak of Mr Low with esteem and reverence. He was a very worthy minister of Christ. In your lodgings, evidence true seriousness, and be agreeable to all in the family. When the meeting-house is repaired, let the Sabbath-evening school meet in it again, and encourage it. These advices I hope you will keep, and view them as the words of your father, near whose heart your best interest lies. Wishing you all grace and good things, I am," &c.

"JOHN BROWN."

It may be properly mentioned, as an event in his life, for such he regarded it, that he paid a visit to London in the spring of 1814, at the period of the Annual Religious Meetings. He had long cherished a desire to witness these holy convocations, which are yearly held in the metropolis, in order that his soul might be refreshed and excited by the spectacles of zeal and piety which they exhibited. He had for many years held communion in spirit with the zealous and devoted Christians who resorted to these solemn Missionary and Bi-

ble Festivals. His name appears among the Directors of the London Missionary Society in their first reports. But he wished for once, before he left the world, to hold personal and actual communion with them, or, as he himself expresses it, "to enjoy the spiritual festival of the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and of the Missionary Society." The concurrence of some favourable circumstances enabled him, in the year mentioned, to gratify this laudable wish, and he enjoyed the visit exceedingly. The letters which he wrote to his family from the scene, express the rich gratification which these meetings, and above all, which the meeting of the Bible Society, afforded him. "I am well," he says, "and much entertained here. This is a wonderful place and a wonderful time, but of all I have seen there is nothing like the Bible Society." But his visit to London was not a season of mere religious indulgence. He preached often. It was on that occasion the writer first enjoyed the pleasure of seeing and hearing him. Mr Brown embraced, too, the opportunity of bringing the destitute state of the Highlanders, with respect to religious reading, before the christian public of London, by means of a printed statement which he circulated; and though, as he states, his limited time prevented him from making many, or any personal, applications, he was as successful as he could possibly have expected.

Under the influence of similar hallowed feelings,

he made an excursion, in the summer of 1818, to the Highlands of Perthshire. Some years before, he had itinerated, by the appointment of Synod, on two several occasions in the Eastern Highlands, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel in the most destitute districts of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire. On this occasion, however, his more immediate object was the gratification of his christian feelings, by witnessing a recent revival of religion which had taken place in the small sequestered valley of Glenlyon in Perthshire. Every thing connected with the Highlands was interesting to him. He had long felt deeply the spiritual destitution of their inhabitants. He had prayed frequently and fervently, and exerted himself laboriously, for their religious improvement. When, therefore, he heard that the Lord had visited his people in this desolate part of the country, and had granted "a time of refreshing from his presence," he could not resist the desire of going, and seeing with his own eyes, what God had wrought. "And when he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad." In the brief account of his tour upon this occasion, which he published, first in one of the periodical works of the day, and then separately, he thus explains the motives which influenced him : "A most interesting account of a remarkable religious movement in the Highlands of Perthshire, transmitted to me by a most valued friend, who has since given the communication to the public in two of the religious journals, excited

in me an earnest wish to visit that part of the country, and though my advancing years and multiplied avocations seemed to dissuade me, I ventured to follow the impulse." In his journey, as well as on the scene of the revival, he embraced every opportunity of preaching the gospel. The account which he gives of the state of religious feeling in the district through which his journey lay, as well as in Glenlyon, is most interesting. Every where an intense thirst for the Word of Life was manifested, and deep seriousness always, and strong emotion often, were displayed under the dispensation of it. His visit was most agreeable to himself, and profitable, it is hoped, to others. "With much satisfaction," he says, "have I spent ten or twelve days in the Perthshire Highlands. Considering my advanced years, and the labours of a numerous congregation, I need scarcely think of ever seeing again my good friends the Highlanders, in their houses and glens; but were I in the vigour of youth, I would count it a duty and a pleasure to pay them a visit for a month every year, and preach among these Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. May the wilderness and the solitary places soon be made glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose."

After having laboured in the work of the ministry for forty-seven years, his congregation, who had ever shown the most marked kindness to him, deemed it proper to testify, in a public manner, how "highly they valued him in love for his work

sake." In May 1824 they presented, by a deputation of their number, a piece of plate, with the following written address, equally honourable to Mr Brown and to themselves : " We have called upon you for the purpose of discharging a trust reposed in us by your congregation. You have laboured long among us, and we wish to let you know that we appreciate your labours. The zeal and the affection with which you have published the doctrine of the Cross—the unwearied diligence with which you have laboured to disseminate religious knowledge—the vigilance with which you have watched over our spiritual welfare—and, above all, sir, the holy and blameless example that you have exhibited to all around you for more than two score years, loudly calls, we have felt, for a suitable return on our part. Impressed with such feelings as these, it has been resolved to present you this gift; of which, in the name, and by the appointment, of the subscribers, we request your acceptance. We are conscious that it is by no means equal to your merits, but we well know that you will not consider it a reward of your services—for that is what we can never pay—but only as a small token of that esteem which we wish you to understand we bear towards your person and character. A great number of those who called you to labour in word and doctrine in this place have already slept with their fathers ; but if by this you are convinced, that, although a race entirely new has arisen in their room, the affection with



which you have been hitherto regarded has undergone no change, and will believe that, although you are now surrounded by numerous and deserving fellow-labourers in the gospel, our partiality toward you has suffered no abatement,—we will never need to regret that we have this day committed to your keeping this attestation of the warmest respects of the United Associate Congregation assembling at Longridge.” With this honourable testimony of the continued good will of his congregation for him, Mr Brown was much affected, and expressed himself accordingly. He always valued highly the esteem and good opinion of his people, and assiduously endeavoured to win it, because, without this, he knew he could do them no good. But not upon this, but the promised presence of his Master, was his dependence for success. “Lo I am with you alway,” he was sometimes accustomed to say, “is a pleasant word for us all.”

About four years after this, Mr Brown’s ministry met with a serious interruption. A fall from his horse so severely injured him, as to interrupt him for a considerable time for public service. For the first time in the course of his long and active life was he laid aside from preaching by indisposition. But he fainted not. In speaking of his fall he always appeared filled with admiration at the merciful combination of circumstances which preserved his life, rather than with impatience and regret at the confinement and pain he endured. He had

scarcely, however, so far recovered from the effects of his accident, as to be able to resume any of the functions of his ministry, when he experienced a severe attack of Bronchitis, which, acting upon an enfeebled constitution, brought him to the very borders of the grave, and in the opinion of all but himself, his medical attendants not excepted, rendered his recovery hopeless. But it pleased his Divine Master, who had some more work still for him in the vineyard, mercifully to restore him to some measure of his former health and strength, and also to his favourite employment of preaching ; a mercy which he most gratefully acknowledged, and religiously improved. Writing to his valued friend the Rev. Donald Fraser, he says, “ Under the favour of Providence I am much better. I was brought low, but the Lord helped me. O that I could act more than ever for his glory. I hope you and other friends will praise him for his goodness to me. The congregation have been very kind to me in my distress.” And, according to his wish, he did endeavour to do more than ever for the Divine glory. Though his illness left behind it a considerable portion of bodily debility, it affected not his passion for doing good. It was just with him as it is with the bent bow, which, as soon as it is unstrung, flies back into its accustomed position. As soon as the pressure of the disease was removed, he began as before to plan and to carry forward some work of usefulness or other. In the pulpit and out of it, there breathed the same un-

quenchable spirit of Christian benevolence which there ever did.

It soon became manifest, however, that his constitution had received too severe a shock to allow of his preaching every Sabbath day, and especially, along with this, of his going through regularly his other ministerial work. The conviction of this, and the entire absence of all probability that it could ever be otherwise, suggested to his family, himself, and the session, the propriety of endeavouring to obtain a colleague to take part of the work along with him. The measure, when presented to his mind, he most cordially acquiesced in; and in all the subsequent steps taken by the session and congregation, he also most cheerfully concurred. He frequently said that, with respect to the important matter of a colleague, he trusted entirely to Providence. He had frequently at this time in his mouth the words of the Psalmist, "I will cry unto God most high, unto God who performeth all things for me." He prayed *himself* respecting this matter, and he solicited the prayers of *others*. Writing to a friend at this juncture, he says, "Be sure to pray for me and my family, and the honest folk here, that God may provide one to help *me*, and do *them* good." True, accordingly, to his principle, he never interfered in the smallest degree to influence, much less to guide, the choice of the people. He was determined from the very first that their choice should be his, and in both the cases in which they called it was so. In both

the cases, indeed, his opinions were in unison with theirs, and it was so far well that it was so ; but even though it had been otherwise, he was prepared to sacrifice his own, and to receive as his fellow-labourer in the Gospel whomsoever the congregation might please to choose. In their first attempt to obtain a colleague the congregation were unsuccessful, in a call which they gave to Mr Thomas Girdwood (now of Penicuik), to be joint pastor along with their aged minister. They afterwards, however, gave a call to Mr William Millar, in which they were happily successful.

The ordination took place November 15. 1831, under the happiest auspices. The interest which Mr Brown shewed all along in the settlement of the young minister, was very visible and even striking. Instead of that *melancholy* feeling which the sight of a successor is not unnaturally fitted to inspire, and which might easily have been forgiven, and instead of that feeling of jealousy, which, though a great deal less pardonable, could easily also in the circumstances have been understood, he shewed always the most unaffected cordiality and cheerfulness. While some, on the day of ordination, could not help thinking of Aaron laying aside his pontifical garments, and clothing Eleazar with them, preparatory to his ascending Mount Hor to die, he himself appeared in the highest spirits. Both in delivering the ordination charge, which was distinguished equally by judgment, feeling, and piety, and in the private intercourse sub-

sequent, there was a liveliness and elevation which surprised every one. Nor was this the effect of any momentary excitement. During the few months that intervened between the settlement and the attack of his last fatal illness, he shewed a cheerfulness so visible and marked, that his family and friends could not help observing it. He felt himself so happy in his colleague, that he could not restrain his feelings upon the subject, either in his conversation or letters. He loved him, and treated him as his son; and his kindness was repaid, for "as a son with the father," Mr Millar "served with him in the Gospel." His family, and friends, and flock, fondly anticipated, as the state of his health indeed seemed to warrant them to do, a few years of this happy union. Mr Millar promised to be a comfort to him in his declining days, and he would have been a help and guide to the youth; and, of course, comparative inexperience, of Mr Millar. But God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts. After the ordination he preached only eight Sabbaths. He ended his ministry with what had been the great subject of it through life, the message of reconciliation, "peace on earth." Had he preached another Sabbath, he intended to have preached from the preceding clause of the verse, "Glory to God in the highest." But it was the will of God that he should sing this part of the angelic anthem, and on an angel's harp, instead of preaching from it with a mortal tongue to mortal men.

In looking forward to the closing period of life,

he felt, in common with his father, whom he greatly resembled in activity, a dread at the thought of being long laid aside from active labour. He more than once referred to the subject, in conversation with his colleague and family, and, on one occasion, just immediately before he took ill, spoke in a very feeling and affecting manner, concerning the case of a brother minister of his acquaintance, who had been rendered incapable, by a lethargic disease, of the least exertion. But though he expressed himself feelingly upon this subject, it was always with the most Christian submission to the will of his heavenly Father. Had he written what he thought and felt, he would probably have expressed himself in similar terms as his father did, in an unpublished letter to him, during the decline of his health. "I can hardly bear," said the venerable Christian and minister, "the thought of being consigned to lie a useless weight on God's earth. But I must not quarrel his disposal. He cannot but do right, nor would I attempt making straight that which he hath made crooked. 'Redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,' is the port I want to be in at, and I wish to leave the circumstances of it to his sovereign disposal. If grace reign through righteousness to eternal life, to me and mine, I ask no more." It pleased God, however, not to put Mr Brown to this painful trial; he was confined to his bed only ten days, and spent only three silent Sabbaths.

MINISTERIAL LABOURS.

THE whole period of Mr Brown's life, of which the foregoing narrative is a mere general sketch, and which extended to the length of nearly seventy-six years, was entirely, and most usefully, filled up in serving God, and "his generation by the will of God." From the day especially of his ordination, when he entered upon an active course of duty in the church, to the very day that he preached his last sermon, he was incessantly occupied in doing good to the bodies and the souls of men. His *ministerial labours*, which naturally claim attention in the first place, were numerous, varied, active, and indefatigable. He lived and laboured for the people of his charge, giving himself wholly to the work of the ministry, "which he had received of the Lord, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

It was the happiness of Mr Brown, and greatly for the profit of his people, that he was a Christian, before he became a Christian minister. The official character was in his case, as it ought always to be, engrafted upon the root of personal piety. He seems, accordingly, always to have felt that the improvement of his own soul in knowledge and holiness, was an essential part of ministerial preparation and labour. He read and studied for himself first, and afterwards for his people, rightly judging that the best way to make the tree flourish,

is to begin with watering the root. Among his loose papers, I find a list of a number of the best books in Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, headed thus, "Books I read orderly for my own improvement."

But he was the student as well as the Christian. In his study, he gave himself, according to the Apostle's direction, to reading and meditation. Few perhaps read more of practical and doctrinal Theology than he did. Indeed, reading was with him a passion. But all his reading was of the kind which tended to make "the man of God perfect," which tended to enrich his mind, and thoroughly furnish him for every good work. Next to his Bible, the writings of Boston, the Erskines, and the English Non-Conformists, were his constant study. By this means he was enabled to bring out of his treasure to his people "things new and old." Indeed, in his spirit, and in the cast of his mind, as well as in the richness and unction of what he delivered, he bore a very striking resemblance to these worthy and distinguished men. It has been said, I think, by Lord Bacon, that reading makes a full man, and certainly never have I met with a person in whom "the word of Christ dwelt more richly," whose mind was more replenished with sound evangelical truth. There was a store, a perfect plenitude of the purest scriptural knowledge about him. His well furnished library of old Divinity, amounting to nearly 1500 volumes, he had to a very great extent, by the aid of habits of

great attention, and a singularly tenacious memory, made his own. He could, in most cases at once, and without ever referring to an index which he kept, tell whether he had among his books a sermon upon any particular text that was mentioned.

He was any thing, however, rather than a mere reader. While he read, he most conscientiously studied. He was not one of those who served God with what cost him nothing. His numerous note-books shew him to have been both diligent and faithful in his study. Even to the very last, or nearly so, his discourses appear written out almost as fully as he delivered them. Nor did he trust even the prefatory remarks upon the psalm, with which the services of the Sabbath were always introduced, to the suggestions of the moment. Though not written, at least not latterly, they were, I know, most carefully studied. Indeed, they bore very visible marks of this. There was a richness, and variety, and point, and pertinency, about them, which could not fail to delight the intelligent, as well as edify the pious. It was but seldom, of course, that the writer was privileged to hear these prefaces, but he never did enjoy this privilege without being both gratified and improved. Could they have been preserved, they would have formed perhaps a better devotional commentary on the Psalms than any which exists.

To these brief remarks respecting the prosecution of Mr Brown's private studies, it deserves to be added, that prayer always formed an important

part of his preparations for the public duties of the sanctuary. Prayer was the leaven with which he mixed up every thing he did. "The longer I live," he says in a letter to a friend, "I think the more that every thing should be seasoned by prayer and supplication." But he appears to have especially leavened and seasoned his private studies for the pulpit with prayer. He went from communing with God in his closet to the sanctuary, and this it was that made his face to shine there : And it was observed, that, as he entered the house of God through the closet, so he retired from it through the closet also, invariably withdrawing for a little in secret before meeting with his family, to pour out his heart before God. Excellent, and necessary as reading and study are, as preparations for public ministerial duty, they will be very inefficient without prayer. Were ministers but to pray more, as well as read and study more, there can be no doubt that they would preach better and more successfully.

In the pulpit, Mr Brown shewed himself "a workman that needed not to be ashamed." He had not, indeed, those qualities of mind which fit for critical discussion, profound argumentation, or elegant illustration, nor had he those high and commanding powers of voice and manner which are indispensable to the eloquent orator. He never made any pretensions to these qualifications ; less, indeed, than he might justly have done. But he possessed and displayed qualifications, which, if

not so imposing and splendid, are at least as useful as any of these qualifications, which, if they did not render him exactly what is vulgarly called a popular preacher, gave him a very high acceptability with the saints, and enabled him to exemplify, in a very perfect form, the Apostle's exhortation to Timothy, "Preach the word, be instant in season, and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."

"In doctrine he shewed uncorruptness." Original and novel views of truth he affected not. Having drunk "the old wine" of gospel doctrine, as exhibited in the writings of Boston, the Erskines, and indeed of all the Reformers, and especially as taught in the Evangelical and Apostolical writings, he was far from desiring new, for he said "The old is better," as he himself expresses it in his preface to "Gospel Truth." The general system which he espoused, was that inculcated by the Marrow Divines, and substantially the same as was taught in all the churches of the Reformation. While he declared to his people "the whole counsel of God," keeping back nothing that was profitable to them; there were certain points of doctrine to which, following in the hallowed footsteps of those distinguished fathers and churches, he gave peculiar prominence, and on which he laid special stress in his public ministrations. The principal of these were, the gift and grant of Christ by his Father to mankind sinners, as such, without exception,—the freeness and universality of the gospel offer, the ap-

appropriating nature of faith,—the deliverance of believers from the law as a covenant of works,—and the necessity of good works, as evidences, but not grounds of justification. These he regarded, and constantly spoke of, as the substance and essence of the gospel system. He calls them, in a letter to a friend, “the life-blood of gospel truth.” The Gospel, according to his view of it, was a system of grace throughout, free, unconditional grace, neither requiring nor even admitting any qualification, moral or evangelical, to entitle to the reception of its blessings. The faith of the Gospel he considered not as a condition, on the performance of which the enjoyment of its blessings was suspended, but the very act of receiving and appropriating these freely offered blessings; and the repentance and holiness which the gospel requires, he taught did not precede and form a warrant for the exercise of faith in Christ, but were the fruits and evidences of that faith. In short, his idea was, that Christ, and all good things in him, were contained in the general gospel promise, and that they became the sinner’s, by his believing this promise with particular self application, which was what he meant by the appropriating nature of faith; and that, as the necessary and natural consequence of this appropriation of Christ, there resulted an entire submission of the heart and will to his commands. His views upon these all-important points may be seen at large in his “Gospel Truth.” In a letter to a friend, he gives the following concise

statement of his sentiments upon some of these. "The judgment of some good people, about evidences being first, and then the claiming of Christ as ours following this, appears to me improper, and puts all wrong. My mind is expressed in the words of an eminent divine, Mr Bell of Glasgow. 'In the first act of believing, sinners have no evidence of grace in themselves. They feel nothing but sin within them. They see a word without them as the sole foundation of faith, and on that they build for eternity.' This is a point of no small importance to saints and sinners. Many of the modern builders are at no small pains to keep their hearers from all confidence and comfort, till they just discern evidences of grace in their hearts, and having got evidence, then and not till then, can they have any just or well grounded confidence. This doctrine seems to me to cast a stumbling block in the sinner's way. Instead of drawing him to Christ, which cannot but be the tendency of all gospel doctrine, it staves him off, and keeps him afar. I confess I have not so learned Christ. The sinner's right turns not at all upon any inward gracious qualification, but purely upon the divine word exhibited."

I do not know how I can better describe his general style of preaching, in respect of its doctrinal character, than in his own words, in describing the strain of Hervey's preaching. "He clearly stated and illustrated the difference of the law, which requires all obedience of man, and of the gospel strict-

ly taken, which freely offers, and gives all privileges to us, and of their blessed harmony, and mutual subserviency in Christ. He aimed to counteract with equal care self-righteous legality on the one hand, and Antinomian licentiousness on the other."

The preaching of the Gospel was with him, both in the spirit and tenor of it, what the term literally signifies,—the preaching of good tidings to perishing sinners. It was the message of peace and reconciliation. He indeed faithfully warned the secure, exposed the hypocritical, endeavoured to awaken and alarm the presumptuous, and denounced the judgments of God upon impenitent transgressors; but these were not the points on which he *dwelt*, the favourite topics on which he loved to enlarge. They were extorted from him by a feeling of awful necessity, and were visibly delivered as "the burden of the Lord." But when he exhibited, and offered Christ to perishing sinners as a great and all-sufficient Saviour, there was a sweetness and tenderness in his whole manner, in the very expression of his countenance, and the tones of his voice, which shewed how much this part of the message was in harmony with his feelings. It was then in a particular manner, that, in the eyes of his hearers, his "feet appeared beautiful upon the mountains," for then "he published peace, brought good tidings of good, and published salvation." To beseech and to plead with sinners was always more his manner than to command

or to threaten. The writer of these pages well remembers hearing him, upon a sacramental occasion, when, after earnestly entreating sinners not to rush upon destruction, he closed his expostulations with reminding them, as the last and most powerful consideration he could employ with them, and this in a tone and manner which told how strongly he felt the force of it himself, that if, after all he could say, they would not be persuaded, but would run headlong into ruin, it would be through a deep and broad river of Jesus's blood, grace, and love. But, indeed, whatever was the subject of his preaching, the love and grace of the Saviour was the great theme. He was the centre in which all its lines met. To borrow again his own language, in speaking of Hervey, "whatever mystery, whatever privilege, whatever duty, he chose to explain, still Christ was all and in all. If he insisted on a divine attribute, he declared how it shone forth in Christ, with the brightest evidence; if on a promise, he shewed how in Christ it was yea, and amen; if on a command, he inculcated the propriety of obedience, and showed how impossible it is to obey, without being united to Him as the head of vital influence. His precious Redeemer was the beginning, the middle, and the end of every sermon with him."

The clear and evangelical strain of his preaching, equally remote on the one hand from Arminian legality, and, on the other, from Antinomian licentiousness, was eminently calculated at once to com-

fort the disconsolate, and to awaken the careless and the secure. And it was, in many instances, signally blessed for these important ends. Many have acknowledged how much they were indebted for their knowledge of the Gospel system, and their other Christian attainments, to his plain and faithful preaching. One of his hearers, in a letter thus writes : “ For at least a year previously to my coming to Whitburn, I was in as gloomy a state as I can well conceive, short of absolute despair. It seemed to me that all the promises and invitations of the Gospel, had some restrictions laid upon their freeness.—But his preaching, the very first summer I sat under his ministry, opened up to me views of the freeness and grace of the Gospel, which I very vaguely perceived before.”

Mr Brown’s *manner* and *style* of preaching were somewhat peculiar, more after the fashion of a former age than the present. His discourses, which were short, sometimes not exceeding half an hour, were broken down into numerous divisions and subdivisions. He either had not the power of amplification, or he never employed it. His object always seemed to be, to say what he had to say in the fewest possible words. By this means he had it in his power to bring forward, in one discourse, a great number and variety of ideas, which had the effect at once of imparting a large mass of tangible information, and of preventing his audience from wearying in the delivery of it. I have heard, accordingly, the people remark, that there was

more divinity in his short sermons than in several lengthier ordinary ones. They were accustomed too, to say, that they were never afraid of seeing him enter the pulpit, for they were sure he would not weary them by his tediousness. It must not, however, be supposed, that his discourses, because they were short and replete with divisions, were dry and formal. They were the very reverse. They were rich in sentiment, full of pointed remarks, and apt quotations of Scripture, and especially distinguished by that well-known but indescribable something, which is commonly known by the name of *unction*. He possessed the happy art of illustrating, by a single passage of Scripture, or an apposite observation, an idea, which, in other hands, would have swelled out into a long paragraph, without thereby becoming either clearer or more impressive. And his quotations of Scripture were not always mere naked quotations. He would oftentimes add an illustration, remark, or reflection, which, while always simple and natural, was frequently very felicitous. Thus, when, upon one occasion, quoting Peter's deprecatory words, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," he added, "the very worst prayer a *sinful man* could offer." He sometimes, too, very happily, availed himself of historical incidents and striking anecdotes, which he accommodated, by the spiritual turn he gave them, to the subject or the occasion. At a sacramental solemnity, when preaching at Douglas, after alluding to the commission which

the Black Douglas received from King Robert Bruce, to carry his heart, after he was dead, to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and bury it there, he exhorted sinners to carry their hearts, not to the empty sepulchre, where once only a dead Saviour lay, but to the living Redeemer, now exalted to the right hand of the throne of God, to give repentance and the forgiveness of sins.

But while his manner and style of preaching were peculiar, they were perfectly natural. He preached the Gospel with simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom — not in the words, or with the airs, which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; yet, though there was as little as possible of show in his mode of preaching, while there was even what might be stated an old-fashioned familiarity of address, there was always real effect. It told frequently in a surprising manner upon his auditors. "There was occasionally," says one who was a constant hearer of his for some years, "eloquence of the truest kind (for it was the energetic utterance of the deep emotions of the heart) in his manner of stating the simplest truths of the Gospel. On one occasion, after speaking with indignation of those ministers (so called), who preach from one year to another without mentioning the Redeemer in any other way than as the Author of our religion, he suddenly became more impassioned than usual, and extending his arms, exclaimed, "*A Saviour, a Saviour*

is he, O sinful men, whom *we* preach unto you." It deserves mention here, that he was never guilty of that too common fault of preachers, the making an effort to be great. I have heard him, not only on ordinary and sacramental occasions, but on several public occasions; never, however, did I observe him deviate from his wonted plainness and simplicity; while impressive always, he was never affected. There was no greater effort discovered in the sermons he preached before a polished audience in London, than in those he addressed every Sabbath to his plain congregation at Longridge.

It has been objected to some evangelical preachers, that they preach too exclusively to saints. This fault Mr Brown was careful to avoid, endeavouring to give to each description of persons "their portion of meat in due season." It was a special point with him, in the prosecution of his ministry, to preach the Gospel to sinners, remarking that "the children were often fed with the dogs." His preaching was entirely free of that loose generality, which makes the preaching of many a minister a mere "beating of the air." It was particular and pointed. As one of his hearers expressed it, "he spoke to cases," endeavouring to bring the truth home to the circumstances and bosoms of his people.

The sacramental occasions at Longridge were seasons of great spiritual enjoyment to serious Christians. The numbers from the neighbouring congregations that repaired to that mount of ordi-

nances at these times, rendered it somewhat like Mount Zion of old, at the seasons of her solemn festivals, "whither the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel." On these occasions, Mr Brown's sermons and addresses were observed to be peculiarly rich in evangelical sentiment, and fragrant even with sacred unction. To those whose senses were spiritually exercised, it was abundantly evident that they had been brought direct from "those ivory palaces," of which the Psalmist speaks, so strongly did "they smell of myrrh and aloes, and cassia." The writer has heard aged Christians speaking with peculiar emotion, of the pleasure and the profit they derived from the closing exhortations he was accustomed to deliver on the different days of the solemnity. While he would sometimes exhort them on the Saturday evenings to appear in their *best* on the morrow, by having on, not their best body garments, but "the best robe" of the Redeemer's righteousness, which was not only prepared for them, but the wardrobe-door wide open, and Jesus himself ready to put it on; he never failed to remind them, at the close of the whole services on the Monday, that there would be a resurrection at a future day of all that they had heard, and seen, and done on the occasion. In his exhortation at the conclusion of the sacramental work on the Sabbath evening, he was peculiarly warm and affectionate. The words of encouragement, and caution, and direction, which he addressed on these

occasions to saints, and the pleadings he employed with sinners, so earnest, so tender, so sweet, will long be remembered by those who were privileged to hear them. For the encouragement of saints, he would sometimes remark, that though now Jesus called them to go hence—some of them it might be to suffering, and others to death, Jesus himself would go hence with them. His call to the disciples, he observed, was not, “Arise and go hence,” but, “Arise and let *us* go hence.” But while, on these occasions, he had encouragements for saints, he had also words of scriptural encouragement for sinners. The latter class especially he never overlooked in any of the services of the season. He thought sacramental occasions furnished excellent opportunities of doing good to sinners, and he valued and improved them accordingly. He was sometimes accustomed to remark at such times, that hardened sinners were like large stones upon the sea-beach, which, though not reached by the ordinary tides, would be struck, and overflowed by the high spring-tides—that sinners who resisted the ordinary dispensations of the Gospel might yet be arrested, and impressed by the more unusual solemnities of a sacramental service. Often he referred, in connexion with the same subject, to the happy effects which were produced upon his own father, when a boy, in witnessing a communion service at Abernethy.

Mr Brown was not a minister merely in the pulpit. Out of it also, both in his private inter-

course with his people, and his Christian labours among them, he, in an especial manner, did “the work of an evangelist, and made full proof of his ministry.” Indeed it was in this department of ministerial work that he appeared to the greatest advantage. As a mere preacher, many equalled and excelled him; but as a working pastor,—one who devoted himself “in season and out of season” to the spiritual good of those committed to his charge,—there were very few to be compared with him. All that knew him can bear witness, that in “labours he was more abundant.” It was a common expression among his people respecting him, that “he was always doing.” Although he had a congregation considerable in point of size, and still more considerable in point of the extent of country over which it was spread, being, at one period, twelve or fourteen miles square, he most regularly and conscientiously performed the ordinary ministerial duties of annually visiting and annually examining his whole congregation; and these duties were performed by him in any thing but a formal and superficial manner. It was his aim on these occasions to make his addresses as personal and particular as he could, and to accommodate them as far as possible to the circumstances and characters of the individuals. He would at such times, accordingly, address the people by their *names*, and seizing hold of some peculiarity in their state and circumstances, would make it the basis of serious and pointed admonitions. Thus, at one

time in the course of his visitations, calling upon a family who had just entered a new house, he was told by the mistress of the family, at the door, that they were in such a state of disorder that they had hardly a place to put him in. He replied, quoting the saying of an old divine, in his own familiar manner, "O, if you have room for the Master, you will surely have room for the servant; and, entering the house, he, in his exhortation, insisted and enlarged upon the necessity of having all old things put away, and all things made *new*; and spoke of the *new* furniture that was required for the spiritual house, and how the trash and lumber of corruption must be cleared away, in order to its being a befitting 'habitation of God through the Spirit.'" On these occasions, when at any distance from the place of worship, he usually also preached, and often to considerable audiences. He was also most exemplary in visiting the sick, both in respect of the attention he shewed, and the tenderness he displayed. He would even, especially in his younger days, sometimes go between five and six miles after sermon, to visit those who had been recommended to the prayers and sympathy of the congregation.

But Mr Brown was not satisfied with merely treading in the beaten track of common ministerial duty. He was even ingenious in devising schemes of usefulness, and most patient and persevering in the execution of them. The young ever occupied a large share of his attention. "The importance

of the rising generation," he observes, in the preface to his collection of Letters for the Young, "can scarcely be overrated. They are possessed of immortal souls, which are in imminent danger of being lost for ever. They are preparing to enter upon the active business of life, in which they may be very useful or very hurtful to multitudes around them, and their character and behaviour will deeply influence the most important interests of the coming generation of mankind." And in correspondence with these ideas and impressions, was the attention he bestowed during his whole ministry upon their instruction and welfare. He, indeed, invariably shewed a *parental* interest in them. One who knew him well, says of him, "I have often thought our friend quite eminent as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, for his interest in, and care for, the young. He might truly be said to have imitated his Divine Master, and carried them in his bosom. With these he knew the greatest hope of usefulness lay; besides the joy it afforded the good man's heart, whenever he found 'a *boy* (a favourite expression of his) in whose heart there appeared to be some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel.'"

In his endeavours to do good to the young, he usually began with their parents, and laboured to impress *them* with what he himself felt. It was ordinarily, I have been told, one of the last things he would say on quitting a house where there were children, especially to the mother, "Now, mind

these children,—mind their eternal interests.” Often he urged those who were descended from pious ancestors not to allow religion to go out of the family, but endeavour to transmit it in entail to those who should come after them. “God has long dwelt,” he says, writing to a friend, “in the family from which you are descended. This you will find a strong obligation on you to do as much as possible for His cause.” He was particularly desirous, and dealt earnestly with parents both in public and private, to have the children of his congregation brought *early* under the means of grace. It was his wish that they should be brought to the place of worship as soon as they were at all capable. He was accustomed to say that children, upon such occasions, often got what remained with them to the end of life. Frequently has he been heard to refer, with very visible pleasure, and in the way of encouragement to parents, to some eminent Christians, who owed their first religious impressions to accompanying, when they were children, a pious father, or a pious mother, to the ordinances of God’s house.

In his more regular or occasional visitations of his congregation, the young were always particular objects of his attention. He ever took the most marked and affectionate notice of them, and had always something kind and serious to say to them. In a manner that was entirely his own, he uniformly contrived to engage their attention wherever he met with them, and to drop some pious advice, or

caution, or remark, suitable to their age or circumstances. He was never almost indeed known to pass, even on the public road, a young person without speaking. If he found them piously inclined, he would commend and encourage them. If he perceived them ignorant and thoughtless, he would give them a serious advice, and accompany it with a tract, of which he carried always in his walks a supply along with him ; and if, as was sometimes the case, he found they could not read, he would inquire into their circumstances, and adopt means, sometimes even before he went home, to get them sent to school. “ A word spoken in season,” says the wise man, “ how good is it !” And often, accordingly, did the incidental hints which Mr Brown threw out upon these occasions, and which he was frequently very happy both in the timing and expressing of, prove “ nails fastened in a sure place by the Master of Assemblies.” The writer of these pages has met with more than one instance of persons advanced in life, who have referred to these as the first seeds of their spiritual being.

At a time when classes for the young were not so common as they are at present, he held meetings monthly with the young men and the young females of his congregation for religious instruction, which were continued from an early period of his ministry, I believe, to the very end of it. And so bent was he upon gaining his benevolent end, that, when he found he could not command the regular attendance of the young men upon a

week day, he, with no small inconvenience to himself, met with them on Sabbath morning, before the commencement of public worship. He was accustomed too, at one period, that he might accommodate himself as far as possible to the circumstances of all, to convene at stated intervals the cowherds, who lived in the immediate neighbourhood of the manse, at the mid-day hour, when they were unoccupied, and instruct them in the principles of religion. His object in these catechetical meetings was at once to inform the judgment and impress the heart, and in this way train up the young people of his congregation for admission into the communion of the church, which he knew they could only be by being made intelligent and lively Christians.

But Mr Brown's care of the young did not cease with their admission to the Lord's table. Knowing how prone they were on reaching this point to relax their exertions in the pursuit of religious knowledge, and become stationary, he was in the regular habit of holding meetings with them subsequently, in order to ascertain their progress, and direct and encourage them in the righteous ways of the Lord. He encouraged also among the young of his congregation the institution of social meetings for prayer. He was anxious for the diffusion of a devotional spirit among them, and this he reckoned, both from what he had seen and his own experience, a most likely means of promoting it. I find him accordingly hailing with delight

the spread of these meetings, both in his own congregation and elsewhere. "I understand," he says, in a communication to one of the religious Magazines, "that, among other good effects of Sabbath schools, they have occasioned in several instances the association of several of the children together in prayer meetings by themselves. This seems an eminent token for good." In the same spirit he mentions, in a letter to a young friend, as a most gratifying occurrence, the formation of a second juvenile prayer meeting in his congregation, consisting of eight or nine promising boys. One of their fellowship meetings, which was held on the Sabbath morning, he usually opened himself with singing and prayer.

He did not, however, reckon it sufficient to use *direct means* for the religious improvement of the young of his congregation. While he sowed by his instructions "the good seed of the kingdom," he endeavoured, by his fatherly care and seasonable advices, to keep the soil as clear as possible of whatever might interfere with its growth. He was especially concerned that young persons, when they left their father's house, should be placed in families and situations where they might enjoy religious advantages and opportunities. Often did he enlarge, both from the pulpit and in private conversation, but not oftener than its importance merited, on the great advantages of being cast when young into religious families, and forming religious connexions; and often also did he take occasion

to expose the high criminality, and imminent peril, of hazarding, for any worldly consideration whatever, their religious interests and prospects. Particularly on the eve of the usual hiring terms, he was invariably accustomed to caution them from the pulpit, in the most earnest and affectionate manner, against engaging themselves to persons who had not the fear of God before their eyes, and observed not the worship of God in their families, remarking, that the obtaining somewhat higher wages might be at the expense of their immortal souls. Indeed, wherever and whenever he perceived any threatenings of danger to their spiritual interests, and he was most quicksighted in descrying these, he always, like a faithful watchman, gave instant warning. The approach of the harvest season, for example, or the occurrence of a fair, being in his apprehension times of especial peril, always drew from him some prudent admonitions and pious counsels. He begged them to remember that they ought to be Christians on the harvest field and in the market place, as well as in the sanctuary.

Nor did these Christian attentions to the young persons who had been brought up under him terminate with the termination of their connexion with the congregation. When, as was often the case, from the peculiar local circumstances of the particular part of the country in which the congregation was situated, they had to leave his ministry, to enter upon distant service, or to prose-

cute business in the large towns, he followed them with similar attentions to their new scenes of labour. It was his manner, previous to their departure, to take them up to his study, administer suitable advices to them, give them a religious book accommodated to their character and circumstances, and then pray with them, commending them to the care and protection of their Father in Heaven; and after they had gone to their new situations and places of abode, he still endeavoured to be serviceable to them, not only by his prayers, but by various active efforts in their behalf. In many cases, when circumstances allowed him, he sought them out himself, kindly inquired after their welfare, and dropt out some suitable hints for their consideration and guidance. In other cases he would recommend them to the notice of some of his pious friends. "Please be so kind," he writes to one of these when in Edinburgh, "as look after a boy, James —, in Ramsay's printing-office. I hope there may be some good thing in him. Give him good advices, and a tract at a time." In other cases he wrote them short admonitory letters, equally distinguished for their affection and their piety. One of the last things he did (the very Sabbath on which he was struck with palsy) was to direct his colleague to read to the young people of the congregation, as his message to them, and it proved his last one, the following letter, dictated some time before, and ad-

dressed to those young persons who had left the congregation, and gone to reside in Glasgow.

“ My Dear Young Friends,

“ The following hints I hope you will always remember. The soul is precious, being immortal, and purchased by the obedience and blood of the Son of God. This being the case, it is far more valuable than a world. The sins we often look on as mere trifles in youth, are fearfully criminal before God, as committed against all the peculiar kindnesses of God to you, and against all the peculiar calls and promises of Him to them. O what eminent advantages you have for promoting the eternal salvation of your souls in your early days ! No perplexing cares of middle age, or infirmities of declining years. Clear discoveries of our infinitely gracious and amiable Redeemer, and remarkably powerful and particular declarations of his redeeming love, meeting with your tender hearts, will make a very heaven on earth. I hope, my dear young friends, you will listen to His precious calls and invitations to the young. ‘ Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not.’ ‘ My son, give me thy heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.’ ‘ Josiah, while he was yet young, sought the Lord God of his father.’ O take care of bad company. Read daily the word of God. ‘ Whereby shall a young man cleanse his way ! By taking heed thereto according to thy word.’ Never neglect

secret prayer. Attend the public ordinances. Read Boston and Hervey's books. Obey your masters. My dear young friends, yours affectionately,
"JOHN BROWN."

To the other classes of his congregation Mr Brown was attentive, as well as to the young. All equally shared his pastoral care, and received from him their portion of meat in due season. The aged and the infirm he always tenderly sympathized with, and accommodated himself to. Besides his more ordinary attentions in the way of visiting and conversing with them, which were neither rare nor formal, it was his frequent practice, when they could not attend on his stated ministrations, to go and preach to them in their private dwellings. This system of house preaching he carried on to a very considerable extent, especially in the earlier years of his ministry ; and thus brought the Gospel to many who either could not or would not come to it. The last time he was engaged in this humble but agreeable part of his work, the writer had the happiness of accompanying him, and heard him with much pleasure address an audience of about twenty people, consisting in a great measure of persons who, through age and other infirmities, were prevented from enjoying the common means of grace.

Those also who had met with bereaving dispensations of Providence, he paid special attention to, pouring the balm of consolation into their

wounded bosoms, and directing them to suitable views, and to a right improvement of the trial. His manner was to collect all the relatives into his house on the Sabbath immediately succeeding the funeral, and, after addressing suitable exhortations to them, pray with them. He wisely judged that on these occasions persons are more than ordinarily impressible; and that truths which, in common circumstances, would glance aside, and produce no effect, will then strike deep, and leave a permanent impression behind. "I have never forgotten," said one to his widow after Mr Brown's death, "what he said to me and others of my friends, when waiting upon him after the death of a relative. 'Mind, sirs,' he said, 'what is lost in the stream is to be found in the fountain.'" He was observed at all times to take particular notice of widows, and had always something consolatory and edifying to say to them. He was seldom known, when out, even in his common walks and rides, to pass the door of such a person, without at least stopping and inquiring for their welfare. On one such occasion, when some of his family, who happened to be with him, objected to his calling, as he proposed, on the ground that he had not time, he mildly insisted on doing so, adding, "Mind she's a widow."

When there were any students in the bounds of his congregation, and there were frequently such, he used every means in his power to be useful also to them. He suggested hints for their guid-

ance, recommended and lent to them suitable books, held a quarterly meeting with them for prayer and religious conversation, and employed them, when it was agreeable to them, in reading to the people in the church during the interval of public worship, and in catechising the young people publicly at the same time. One who himself enjoyed the privilege of being a student in his congregation, thus describes this part of his ministerial attentions : “ It was his manner to invite the students residing within the bounds of his congregation to come to him together, three or four times every year, that he might converse and pray with them. He used to appoint beforehand a topic in Theology, on which he expected them to consult some systematic work. He recommended especially the Synod’s Catechism. He always, however, proposed on the spot a question of a more practical kind, such as, ‘ What are the marks of a true Christian ? ’ and then asked each of the young men to do the same. On both sorts of questions he first heard them one by one, and then, with a meekness and suavity I shall never forget, delivered his own opinion, generally prefacing his remarks with some kind expression of his satisfaction with what had been already said. On one occasion he exhorted us to cultivate what he termed an *arguing* method of prayer,—the filling of our mouths with arguments, and pleading the accomplishment of our requests by those most cogent of all reasons, derived from our own necessi-

ties, and God's exceeding 'great and precious promises.' He modestly added, that though he had very much coveted this most excellent gift, he could not say that he had ever attained it. He was also accustomed to urge, upon these occasions, the propriety of the students visiting the sick in their own neighbourhood. 'My brother and I,' he would say, 'used to do so at Haddington, by our father's directions, and we never *rued* it.' He exhorted us also, as teachers, to do every thing in our power for the young immortals committed to our care. He reminded us of the usefulness of a hint, of a word spoken in season, and advised us to be now and then dropping such hints in the hearing of our pupils. He would exhort us at the same time to give them a more serious lengthened address on the Saturday; and should any seem more deeply affected than the rest, to detain them for a few minutes, that we might have an opportunity of deepening the salutary impression already made. He was also very anxious that the students should attend the fellowship-meetings in their districts." He was in the habit also of writing occasionally to the students notes and short letters, which he made the vehicles of suitable instruction and advice. To one under his inspection he thus writes: "Being very busy in assorting books for the Highlanders, it is not in my power to offer many advices at present. I trust that you will always read the oracles of God with much care, as the infallible text-book of Divinity; that you will

study Divinity as a means of communion with God, and conformity to him, not as a dry philosophical science. Do all you can to promote seriousness among your fellow students. I am glad of the prayer-meetings for missionary exertions. I hope also you will keep up the other meetings. Never be fond of new phrases in Divinity. In usual cases, keep the good old way. Read the Erskines and Boston much. What stores of divinity are in these! Much prayer will fit you for preaching the Gospel. Receiving grace thereby from a redeeming God, my son, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." In these commendable endeavours to benefit a most interesting and important part of his charge, he seems to have had his father's wishes and endeavours ever before his eyes. "I am glad," he says, writing to his eldest son, "that the students are doing so well, and obliged to you for giving them your grandfather's letter. O what ardour he shewed in being useful in a dry and withered corner, as he used to call it, and in a dead time of the church. I would wish while I live to fulfil his wishes of usefulness."

There are occasionally in every congregation individuals who, through natural or accidental defects, lie beyond the reach of the ordinary means of instruction. There were such in Mr Brown's congregation; and he did not neglect them any more than the rest. He always contrived in some way or other to be useful to them. To one of his

people, a young man, for example, who, through excessive deafness, could derive no profit either from his discourses or conversation, he was in the habit of writing letters. The following letter to this person is not undeserving of a place here, on its own account, as well as in illustration of the remark now made.

“ Dear Johnny,

“ I would have seen you in your distress long e’er now, but knowing your deafness, I thought it would serve you very little. I now write you the following lines. As God lays his rod upon you in your youthful days, may the experience of Jeremiah be yours, that it is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. It will be so if the rod of God convince of sin as the cause, and set it in a better and clear point of view ;—if it mortify you to the vanities of life, which our young minds are very ready to be taken with ;—if it drive you to extract all satisfaction from the fountain of it, in the Godhead, as revealed in Jesus ;—if it humble and spiritualize your mind, and prepare you for a better world. May all the distresses which Providence lays on you or me have this happy effect, and then we will have reason to say, It hath been very good that I have been afflicted. I hope you will always mind that troubles in themselves are not good, nor can do us good. Only as viewed in promises are they sanctifying and upstirring: Such promises are these :—‘ When thou passest

through the waters,' &c. 'As many as I love I rebuke.' 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' Let us credit these. Let us cordially embrace them, and hereby all troubles will work for our good. Your situation, especially in youth, is very dull; but if you improve the comforts of Christ in the word, though you cannot rise up at the voice of music, you may have songs in the house of your pilgrimage. While deaf to earthly voices, O to hear the voice of God's beloved Son. While shut out from the company of men, you can have fellowship with the blessed Father, Son, and Spirit, in love, grace, and consolation. While debarred from public ordinances, may God be a little sanctuary to you. May Jesus, who has the tongue of the learned, speak a word in season to you, He and a good conscience are the best preachers. Your trouble also calls for preparation for death. That is the end of all men, and the living should lay it to heart. By acquaintance with Him who has the keys of hell and of death, by committing our spirits into his hand, by leaning on the rod of his word in the valley of the shadow of death, we get safely and comfortably through. May our latter end be like this. I may withal add, your trials have been singular and peculiar in your time of life; but I hope an infinitely wise and kind Father has the guiding of all, and resignation to Him is a very practicable exercise. I commend you to the care of the Father of mercies, and wish all may end well with you, which is a matter of infi-

nite importance to the immortal soul. You may get a volume of Erskine's Sermons to read, in order to recreate you. I am yours affectionately,
"JOHN BROWN."

Besides these special means of usefulness which Mr Brown employed with particular classes of his congregation, and which were, of course, accommodated to their particular characters, ages, and circumstances, he employed a variety of means, of a more general kind, intended and fitted for the good of all. He was particularly careful to improve, with this view, every occurrence of public or local interest, and thus, in a way peculiar to himself, converted the passing dispensations of Providence into channels through which the truths of the gospel were made to flow. It rarely happened that he had not, before pronouncing the blessing, some warning exhortation to give, some pious counsel and direction to offer, some consolatory observation to make, suggested by the season of the year, the state of the congregation, or the events of Divine Providence. So desirous was he of benefiting his people, that he was accustomed, if any thing had particularly struck him in the course of his reading during the week, or if he had met with any interesting piece of religious intelligence, to communicate it, with an improving remark of his own, to the congregation next Sabbath. It was his practice, also, during the whole, or the greater part, of his ministry, to observe stat-

ed diets of public prayer on the Sabbath, in behalf of the interests of religion; a practice which he recommended, in his "Means of Doing Good," to ministers, as a very important means of usefulness. In a letter to Mrs Brown, written by him when on a mission to Aberdeenshire, and during the agitation of the Old-Light Controversy, he thus refers to these devotional observances: "I wish you to tell Ebenezer (his brother) to observe a public diet of prayer with our congregation, as I do ordinarily once a month in summer, and to have a particular reference to the Synod. O pray much about us, that the Lord may not break us in pieces in his anger." It has been already mentioned how he employed the students in reading to the people, and catechising the young in their presence, during the intervals of public worship. His object in this was, principally, to secure as much as possible the religious observance of a portion of the Sabbath-day, which is but too frequently spent in idle and unsuitable conversation; and, when he had no student that he could employ in this exercise, he caused useful and interesting religious books to be distributed in different parts of the place of worship, for the perusal of those who might choose to avail themselves of them. He exerted himself, also, in erecting and keeping up fellowship-meetings among his people, and he had also several in active operation in the different quarters of his congregation. One met regularly, for a long period, in his own house; and, as an example and encouragement to

the attendance of other persons, he both punctually attended this one, and visited, occasionally, also others. No stranger could have guessed from his manner on such occasions, that he occupied a station superior in dignity to that of any one present. "There could hardly," says one who was present frequently with him at these meetings, "have been a more beautiful specimen of that humility which makes its possessor esteem others better than himself." It was his opinion that these meetings were admirably calculated to promote the life of piety. He thus speaks of them in his "Means of Doing Good :"—"Ministers may do much good by setting up and encouraging fellowship-meetings. These are warranted, and abundantly exemplified, in scripture. The advantages of such religious fellowship are great and many. They are the best preservatives against those infections which arise from communication with persons of vicious principles and ungodly practices. They secure all the advantages which we can propose to ourselves by any kind of intimacies, such as friendly sympathy, counsel, warning, assistance, or comfort. In such societies men are profited themselves, as well as edify others. And such religious fellowship tends to recommend religion to others around, and to set forth Christianity in an honourable and edifying light ; and, withal, it remarkably tends to anticipate and prepare men for the holy and harmonious fellowship of the heavenly state." Mr Brown also distributed great numbers of tracts and small

books, with the happiest effects, among his people. He always kept a stock of these by him, and was equally diligent and judicious in selecting the opportunities and the objects of his christian charity. If a person had done him a service, if any of his people were removing out of the congregation, if any one in his neighbourhood was visited with affliction, he had always some little book to offer to their acceptance, as an expression of his kindness or sympathy. He seldom or never went abroad, not even to take a common walk, without having some tracts in his pocket; and in giving these away, he usually contrived, by some introductory observation, or kind expression, to take off from the action the appearance of intrusiveness, and secure to the silent messenger a favourable reception. The writer remembers how, on one occasion, when riding along with him, they passed some young men at work on the road side, strangers however to Mr Brown. After exchanging salutations with them, he entered into a short conversation, and, on leaving them, gave them some tracts, which were well and gratefully received.

By none of the means, however, which he employed among his people, was he more useful than by his private intercourse. This, instead of counteracting, as is but too frequently the case, the influence and effect of his sermon on the Sabbath, tended to deepen and rivet the impression which they produced. He went about a good deal among his people, but not for the purpose of idle gossiping,

or ceremonious visiting, but, like his Divine Master, in doing good. His visits were usually short, but he had always something to say in commendation of Christ and religion. In a most natural and unaffected way he would throw out some useful hint, or drop some seasonable advice. He never called at any house, or went into any company, without leaving an odour of kindness and piety behind him. It seemed to be always a point with him, in these brief visits, to take occasion, from something that had presented itself in the course of the conversation, to bear at least a *parting* testimony in behalf of godliness. “Now, remember always,” he once said, when taking leave of one on whom he had been calling, who was a tailor; “remember always the ‘best robe,’ and, while you are clothing others, do not forget to be clothed yourself with the spotless garment of Christ’s imputed righteousness.” What was said of Dr Watts might have been truly said of him,—“In visiting the families of his congregation, he was always careful to leave a savour of divine truth upon their minds; and as his own piety was cheerful, he endeavoured to diffuse its benign influence wherever he went. Walking or riding, in company or retirement, he was either improving himself or others.”

Nor was it merely in knowledge and contemplative piety that Mr Brown laboured by these and such like means to train his people. He went before, and excited them to follow in the exercise of active Christian zeal. The cause of piety, and

benevolence, and righteousness, and temperance, had in him and his people warm friends and advocates. Besides the aid which they afforded to the general County Bible Association, and a regular annual collection (and usually a very liberal one) to the Scottish Missionary Society, there were several congregational societies for different religious objects, which were very respectably supported. It deserves, also, to be mentioned here, that when the Temperance movement commenced in this country, he was so far from being wedded to established habits and customs, as is frequently the case with the aged, that he lent to the cause his ready countenance, became himself a member, and got a society erected in the congregation.

What the precise amount of good was which he was the means of accomplishing among his people by his active and abundant labours, will, of course, remain undiscovered till the Judgment-day. It is certain, however, that, in the highest and best sense of the word, he was an eminently successful minister. While, as might have been expected, there were some over whom he had to lament that he had laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought and in vain,—he had the highest satisfaction of seeing many, of whom he entertained the best hopes, grow up under his ministry, “adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour, in all things.” Many, also, he had seen precede him into the other world, who had ripened under his ministration for glory, and who are now his joy and

crown in the Church triumphant above. And though he has rested from his labours, the influence of his ministry and example has not ceased. His works still follow him, and will praise him in the gate.

HIS PUBLIC LIFE.

To one who had observed the diligence and assiduity with which Mr Brown discharged the ministerial duties of his congregation, it would hardly at first sight have appeared credible that he could find time for doing much besides. Certain, at least, it is, that many would have found, in the multiplicity and weight of these, an apology, and a very plausible one too, for confining themselves to them. But he had the disposition, and he found the time, for doing much more. While he cultivated, with a care and activity which those only who were upon the spot can have any conception of, his own particular vineyard, he extended his attention and labours far beyond it. Indeed the field in which he felt himself called upon to labour was "the world."

Comparisons have been oftentimes made between different spheres of labour, and some have found what they reckoned a satisfactory excuse for doing comparatively little, in the circumstance that their sphere was a small one. Had they been placed in a conspicuous station, in a metropolitan charge, or in one of the pulpits of a great town congregation, they

would then, they flatter themselves, have been able to be extensively useful. But they wanted scope, they thought, in their retired and private situation, for the display of their activities. Their gifts had not "room and verge enough" to develope and exercise themselves. In short, they considered themselves, by the nature of their situation, as "candlesticks hid under a bushel." In Mr Brown, however, we have a striking proof and illustration that a man's usefulness depends more upon himself than upon the sphere in which his lot has been cast; in fact, that it is not so much the sphere that makes the man, as the man that makes the sphere. When a person lays out himself to do good, it is absolutely incalculable what opportunities he will find of doing it. Like the prophet's oil, they will multiply in the very improving of them. Indeed, such a man creates opportunities to himself. Mr Brown's situation, in a comparatively barren and thinly peopled district of country, was every thing but a favourable one for bringing him into contact with the world around him. But it is almost certain that he could hardly have been more useful than he was, or even better known, though he had occupied the most public station in the religious body with which he was connected. Perhaps few ministers of any denomination have been honoured to do more *real* good in the world than he did.

The public good which Mr Brown was enabled to accomplish during the course of his long life, was of a very varied kind. He confined not his

attention to one kind of good, nor to one set of means of doing it. "Whatever his hand found to do, he did," without any regard to its being great or small, splendid or common-place; and he did it by whatever means he could at the moment command. The instruction of the ignorant, the reclaiming of the vicious, the relief of the distressed, the comforting of the sorrowful, the dissemination of sound views of evangelical truth, and the promotion in general of the cause of piety, and righteousness; these, and such as these, were the benevolent christian objects which he kept in view, and laboured to accomplish.

In the enumeration of the means by which Mr Brown laboured to promote these important objects in the church, and world at large, the first place is perhaps due to his correspondence. He was not, indeed, a professed letter-writer. He never made any pretensions to the enviable gift which Cowper and Newton so richly possessed. All his letters, as far at least as I have had access to see them, are plain and simple expressions of his ideas; and most of them very brief, in many cases, indeed, rather notes than letters. As one of his most intimate friends expresses it, he spoke as he thought, and wrote as he spoke. His letters were generally short, but contain a true index of his heart. He never wrote but when he had something to say, and it seemed a matter of no consequence to him, whether it would occupy a sheet or could be comprised in three lines. He said what he intended to say in

the words which most readily presented themselves, and stopt when he had done. Few, however, carried on a more extensive correspondence than he did, or accomplished more good by it. Besides a very great number of individuals in Scotland, he corresponded with a number of ministers and others, both in England and America. I notice letters to him from Drs Romeyn, Proudfit, and Macleod, in America; and from Mr Newton, Dr Ryland, Mr Ambrose Serle, and many others, in England.

The views under which he carried on his correspondence, and the ends he proposed to himself in it, he thus states, in recommending the practice to others. "Much good," he says, "may be done by religious correspondence. An active, intelligent, benevolent Christian, may thus stir up others, in a persuasive and effectual way, to love and good works. While the hints of conversation, however good, are apt to be forgotten, we may often review, and thus fix upon our memory, what our friend has written. If, in our speech, we are to minister grace to the hearers, we have opportunity to promote the same great end in a much wider circle by religious letters. What comfort have multitudes received from the judicious and affectionate letters of their friends in Christ? The house of mourning, the sick-bed and the death-bed, bear ample testimony to this. And let not believers forget their ungodly relations and friends in this labour of love. An undisguised communication of sentiment and Christian feeling may be the happy means of soften-

ing, and leading to serious reflection, those who may have hitherto remained hardened and thoughtless."

A considerable portion of his sermons were dedicated to the consolation and direction of the afflicted and bereaved. Large as the circle of his acquaintanceship was, he scarcely ever omitted to express his sympathy with any one within its ample limits, who laboured under suffering, and to avail himself of the opportunity of presenting to them the instructions and consolations of religion. In many instances, when the circumstances of the case were so singular as to justify it, he extended his attentions beyond that circle, and shewed the considerate kindness of a friend to comparative strangers. It was agreeable to him as a man, to have it in his power to alleviate, to any extent, the sufferings of humanity, and especially delightful to him as a Christian and a minister, to be the instrument of promoting the spiritual interests of his afflicted fellow creatures. By means of the numerous letters he wrote on these occasions, he was successful in pouring the balm of consolation into many a sorrowing bosom, and obtained, in not a few instances, a way to hearts, which would have been otherwise shut against him. Others of his letters were dedicated to the less pleasant, but not the less necessary, purpose, of awakening the careless, and convincing the thoughtless. When he saw any one whom he thought he could have the smallest influence with, running headlong down the broad road to ruin, he never failed to write

him faithfully, but very affectionately, warning him of his danger, and directing him along the right way. Thus, in a letter to a friend, he says, "I am remembering the poor dying man, according to your request, but have one to recommend to your sympathy also, a Mr —, who was at the English school with me, an infidel, I fear for the most of his time, and now dying at ease. In the view of God as merciful, I sent him a letter, and a good book, but I hear of no effect : O mind him in your supplications." He thought that no means ought to be left untried to turn sinners from the error of their ways to the Saviour. "Let us," he writes at another time, "pluck brands out of the burning, and get them quenched in the love and blood of the Redeemer."

A considerable number of his letters were directed to the important end of confirming and encouraging persons in a course of religion and usefulness. It was his manner, whenever he heard of any individual in whom he had the smallest interest, giving indications of unwonted seriousness, or shewing a visible attention to the things of religion, to write a few prudent hints for his encouragement and direction, and invite his correspondence. If, too, he heard of a minister distinguishing himself for his attachment to gospel doctrine, or for his Christian activity, he immediately, and without any regard to the religious denomination to which he belonged, wrote him as a brother, expressing his interest in him and his exertions, and

wishing him God speed. Or, if a book issued from the press, the sentiments of which he approved, and thought calculated to be useful, he was almost sure to write an encouraging letter to the author, as well as recommend it to circulation, reckoning, as he himself expresses it, in reference to Mr Swanston's sermons, "both his honour and his duty to be an instrument of spreading savoury evangelical truth."

Many of his letters were letters simply of common counsel and advice, and he was well fitted to advise, where natural good sense and Christian prudence would avail. There was a caution and delicacy about his manner, accompanied with no small portion of the meekness and gentleness of Christ, which eminently fitted him for the office of a Christian counsellor. Thus, to one of his correspondents, situated within the bounds of a newly erected congregation, who had complained of the legal strain, as he thought, of the minister who had been recently settled, he writes, "I am not acquainted with the young man sent to —, but hope, by carefully reading and studying the Divine word, and the best divines, which he will have an opportunity of doing, in a retired situation such as —, he will improve in savoury suitable gospel preaching. Perhaps some hearers in the new congregation may need to be roused, and the Lord may see this needful, particularly at the first. Much prayer for ministers does them much good. I hope in your case it will not be wanting."

With several persons, also, it is known, that he carried on a regular correspondence upon doctrinal and experimental religion. His name and Christian reputation, both as a minister and author, caused him to be consulted by persons whom he had never seen or known, who were in doubt and darkness, either respecting their state, or respecting some of the doctrines of the Gospel; and he endeavoured to meet their case wisely and tenderly. “ Though I am a stranger to you,” he says, writing to one of these correspondents, “ yet from your letter I cannot but feel for you, and feel most tenderly, and wish the Lord may direct me to say any thing for your relief.”

The largest proportion, however, of his letters, are dedicated to the great object which was always uppermost in his own mind, that of doing good. He had always some good design, suited to the character and circumstances of the person, to suggest or recommend, some useful hint to give by way of direction, excitement, or encouragement. Thus, writing to one, he says, “ The present time seems peculiarly promising with respect to the spread of the Gospel and the coming of Christ’s kingdom. I hope you, my dear friend, will embark in it, and do all you can for Christ, and for every relative you have.” To another he says, “ Some time ago I hinted to your worthy brother, that when he travelled in the south, he might take a few tracts, and scatter them among the young he occasionally met with. I have sent for this purpose a few copies

of a small address of my late father's." What he could do alone, he did to the full extent of his ability. He spared neither time, nor money, nor exertion, but these of course had limits. He could not do every thing himself, nor so much as he could wish ; what, however, he could not do himself, he endeavoured to engage others to do. In this way, the amount of benevolent machinery he set in motion is altogether incalculable. Nothing was too great to be above his notice ; nothing too small to be beneath it. Upon the same principle, and from the same spirit, in which he would write to the managers of a village library, to secure the introduction of some favourite Nonconformist writer, he wrote to Governor Don of Gibraltar, upon the mere footing of schoolboy acquaintanceship, to solicit his countenance and aid to the circulation of Bibles in Spain. Wherever, in fact, he saw a person possessed of the means and the wish to do good, he endeavoured, by his notes and letters, to direct them into proper channels of usefulness, and he had the satisfaction of seeing, in many cases, his hints and suggestions acted upon. The relief of some destitute widow or other distressed person, the education of poor children, the circulation of some good book, the establishment and support of some religious institution, the publication of some useful but forgotten tract or treatise, these, and such as these, were the subjects of a very large portion of his letters. But, whatever was the more immediate object of his letters, they were,

without exception, distinguished by an unequivocal fervent desire to promote at once the individual's interests, and the interests of religion. It was not without reason that one of his correspondents thus expresses himself: "In all of them," he says, "I perceive so much of Christian spirit, and such an uncommon concern for my interest, comfort, and usefulness, as cannot fail to excite feelings of gratitude." He scarcely indeed ever wrote the shortest note upon the most ordinary business, without having in it some serious hint or advice.

To this brief account of Mr Brown's correspondence, it may not be out of place to add the few following letters, written to different individuals, on occasions of domestic or personal trial. The first is addressed to a very intimate friend on the occasion of his meeting with severe pecuniary losses.

" Whitburn, Jan. 20. 1817.

" Very Dear and much Respected Friend,

" It gives my wife and me much concern to hear of your present heavy affliction; most tenderly we sympathize with you and Mrs S——. We believe you have an interest in the kind efficacious sympathy of the High Priest of our profession. This is a severe stroke on your outward substance. But, as Christians, your outward substance is but your moveables. You still, we believe, have a kingdom that cannot be moved, a portion not changeable, or liable to be taken from

you by the sudden shocks of time. Cleave closer to Jesus, who is in himself, and fulness, unsearchable riches. Trade more with the heavenly country, and you will live and die boasting that you have become exceeding rich, and with riches which will not take wings and fly away. It is comfortable God enabled you and Mrs S—— to make a Christian use of what you had, in much liberality to the interests of Christ and his poor ones, and, after all, you both will see that this is among the ‘all things which will work for your eternal good.’ In distress, you know, there is no book like the book of God. ‘I had perished,’ says the Psalmist, ‘in my affliction, but thy word comforted me.’ Boston’s Crook in the Lot is a most useful book. In his last days, our friend Mr Gilfillan was reading it. Mr Ogle of your town sent me a small book, called ‘Letters to Christians under affliction.’ There is one, I think, particularly suitable, page 56. All grace and comfort be with you both. I am, most cordially and regardfully yours,

“JOHN BROWN.”

The two following letters were written to a person who had laboured for some time under distress of mind, but who began to obtain, in the faith of the gospel, the relief which he sought.

“*Whitburn, Jan. 21, 1821.*”

“My Dear Sir and Kind Friend,

“I received yours some weeks ago. It gives

me much pleasure that the Lord is directing you to solid comfort in himself. Oh! what pleasure is there in that word, ‘Delight thyself in the Lord, and he will give thee the desire of thy heart. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste.’ My good friend, remember always a Redeeming God is the orphan’s stay, the Father of the fatherless, and that, as one whom his mother comforteth, so will God comfort his people. As a sinful creature, try to accept Christ, the gift of God in the promise. Likely I have commended them to you before, but Boston’s Fourfold State, Boston on the Covenants, and R. Erskine’s works, especially a compend of them in his own words, called the Beauties of R. Erskine, are most useful; also Marshall on Sanctification. Mr W.’s ministry, I hope, will be useful to you. He is, I have always thought, a solid Christian, and a clear gospel preacher. I hear there is a congregation setting up in M——. This will be convenient for you to attend, and, I hope, eminently useful for the communication of knowledge and grace all around. It is only by the true gospel of Christ men are saved and edified. I hope the prayers and wrestlings of the serious persecuted people in the country around long ago, will come up before God, and be answered in sending the gospel now, and making it successful. Among others, those of my namesake, John Brown of Priestfield, usually called the Christian carrier, who was shot at the end of his own

house by Claverhouse. The present time seems peculiarly promising with respect to the spread of the gospel, and the coming of Christ's kingdom; and I hope you, my dear friend, will embark in the cause, and do all you can in your station, with every relation you have. The cause of our Lord Jesus Christ among the Highlanders seems to do well. A great and general desire of the gospel is among them, and there is a great desire among God's servants and people of all denominations, to send it to them. All grace and good things attend you. I wish to acknowledge to the Lord with thankfulness, his kindness in making any hint of mine useful to you.—I am most affectionately yours,

“JOHN BROWN.”

“*Whitburn, Sept. 23, 1825.*”

“My Dear Sir,

“I am glad your mind is now composed, and in peace. The atonement of the Redeemer, made over to guilty creatures, and received by faith, is the great means of peace. ‘Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on him, because he trusted in him. We that believe do enter into rest.’ Few things are so valuable as our souls dwelling at ease on good grounds, and having a regular flow of natural spirits. With respect to your views of the ministry, I fully believe it is your earnest desire to build the house of the Lord. Your resolution to seek counsel from the Lord himself is the best plan, and he will guide you to

what is best. What a precious promise is that, 'The Lord will guide you continually.' Oh! let us say in every case, 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel while here, and afterwards receive me to glory.' You can also consult ministers and Christians as you have access. I lately got a severe hurt by a fall from my horse, and have been unable to go to the Synod or do my work as usual, but, in great mercy and wisdom, I was spared, and am better. I am much obliged to you for your opinion of me as your almoner. Should you think proper to send me any thing, I hope it will be laid out for the best purposes. I cordially wish you, your brother, and all relatives, all grace and good things.—I am, with much regard, yours,

“JOHN BROWN.”

The following letter is addressed to a gentleman who had recently sustained the loss of a very promising son.

“*Whitburn, Jan. 6. 1831.*”

“Respected Sir,

“It gives my family and me much concern to hear of your son's death at Edinburgh. A young man taken away when just entering into the world, with fair prospects, must, to parental tenderness, be a sore affliction; we sympathize with you, but the sympathy of our Redeemer is infinitely more valuable and tender, and to him we would recommend Mrs B. and yourself. 'Cast thy burden up-

on the Lord, and he will sustain you,' is the call from the throne. Oh ! what pleasure lies in being resigned to the will of our redeeming God. The Lord gave you this pleasant and amiable enjoyment, and the Lord takes him away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. Dr Erskine, late of Edinburgh, has a small book, wherein he has several letters relative to the death of sons and daughters, very useful and pleasing.—I am yours respectfully,

“JOHN BROWN.”

But, extensive as the circle of Mr Brown's correspondence was, the sphere of his active public labours in behalf of religion was not less so. Wherever a field of usefulness presented itself, whether at home or abroad, he immediately thither directed his attention, and endeavoured to do something in the cultivation of it, labouring himself, and stirring up others to labour. When the Missionary spirit burst forth at the close of the last century, by the institution of the London Missionary Society, he was one of the honoured band who, in this country, first responded to the appeal that was made to them from the south, by uniting in prayer for the propagation of the gospel, and contributing his money and services, as a subscriber and director, for that purpose. In concert with the late Rev. Mr Duncanson of Airdrie, and some others of his brethren, a public Missionary Prayer Meeting was early instituted, embracing the ministers of the neighbourhood, and which circulated periodically

through the different congregations. He was also a constant and active friend of, and contributor to, the Bible Society, the Scottish Missionary Society, and various other Religious and Benevolent Institutions. He likewise took a very warm interest in the operations of the London Tract Society, with the committee of which he kept up a constant correspondence towards the end of his life.

The sphere, however, which occupied his principal attention and most active efforts, his earliest and his latest labours, was the Highlands. In the education and evangelization of the inhabitants of that neglected portion of our own country, he took a most lively interest. He was truly what he calls himself, "The ardent friend of his Celtic countrymen." He was almost incessantly thinking of them, writing about them, labouring for them. Thus, speaking upon this subject, he says very beautifully, "The Grampian Mountains are daily in my view, and the situation of the hardy and interesting race which dwell beyond them, is seldom for a day absent from my mind. Within that stony inclosure, I often say to myself, reside thousands who never read a page of the book of life, who are perishing for lack of knowledge; and who, if something is not done for their instruction, must live and die as ignorant as the inhabitants of Japan or China. They are not only my fellowmen, but my countrymen, to whose unexampled courage Britain has been so often indebted in the day of danger, and by whose hands have been won

some of the greenest laurels which compose her wreath of victory. We have not done, we cannot do too much, for the heathen abroad ; but, oh, have we not done too little for the heathen at home !”

His first efforts in this field seem to have been directed to the diffusion of evangelical knowledge, in those parts of the Highlands where the English language is spoken. Among his papers, I find the draft of an overture of the date of 1798, which he, in concert with several others of his brethren, presented to the Associate Synod, in reference to a plan of Itineracies for the more destitute parts of the country. The plan proposed was to some extent acted upon. Occasional deputations were appointed by the Synod to itinerate, and fulfilled their missions. He himself was appointed twice, and itinerated in the Eastern Highlands, first with his brother the Rev. Ebenezer Brown, Inverkeithing, and the second time with the Rev. Mr King, Montrose. The result of his visits was the conviction, that something decisive and permanent ought to be done, to supply those parts of the country with a pure dispensation of the Gospel. A printed circular was accordingly issued in 1801, signed by him and his brother, addressed to the pious and charitable, proposing the organization of a constant systematic itineracy, as more efficient than mere occasional missions, and soliciting assistance for that purpose. The proposal, though a highly rational one, does not seem to have met with sufficient encouragement, for it was never

carried into effect. He ceased not, however, to take an interest in, and to encourage, missionary operations in these destitute districts, upon whatever scale conducted. So impressed was he with the necessity of active exertion, and the usefulness even of the most private efforts, that he says, in the account of his Tour to the Highlands of Perthshire in 1818: "Were I in the vigour of youth, I would count it a duty and a pleasure to pay my good friends the Highlanders a visit for a month every year, and preach among these Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The Gaelic population of the Highlands engaged subsequently his special notice, and, during the whole future course of his life, he laboured most incessantly and assiduously for their benefit. In all the varied exertions that have been made of late years in their behalf, he took a most active part; in some instances originating them, and always countenancing and promoting them. As one of his correspondents expresses it, "he was among the first that took the field, and he continued the unwearied champion of the good cause." His own plain statement of the interest he took in the evangelization of the Highlands, as given in his "Brief Account of a Tour in the Highlands," is as follows: "You are sufficiently aware," he says, writing to a friend to whom the account is addressed, "that, for a long course of years, the religious and moral state of our Highland countrymen has been with me a subject of deep and painful interest. Living

as I do in the vicinity of the principal road by which the live stock produced in the north of Scotland is conveyed to the English markets, I had many opportunities of conversing with the Highlanders employed in driving the cattle; and, from my peculiar habits, my inquiries were chiefly directed to the discovery of the degree in which they possessed the means of religious improvement. The melancholy result of this kind of investigation, was a persuasion that ignorance and immorality were prevalent in a very great degree in many of the Highland districts, and an anxiety to ascertain, if possible, more exactly the dimensions of an evil, obviously great, and to inquire into the most probable means of removing it. The more I inquired, the more strongly was I impressed with the powerful claims our countrymen in the Highlands and Islands had on the Christian sympathy and assistance of their more highly favoured neighbours, though I could do little more than ‘sigh in secret’ over their privations and miseries, and to commit their cause to Him who is the confidence of the ends of the earth. I read with much pleasure the account of the revival of religion in part of the Highlands by Mr Stewart, then minister of Moulin. I surveyed with pleasure the labours of the pious missionaries and catechists of the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge, as well as those of the zealous and conscientious clergy; but I could not help saying, The harvest is great, but the labourers are few; and I prayed the Lord

of the harvest to thrust out labourers into his harvest. It was, therefore, with no ordinary feelings of delight, that I witnessed the formation and triumphant progress of the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools, and the wide and liberal dispersion of the Word of God by means of the Scottish Bible Society, and the Auxiliaries of that truly august institution the British and Foreign Bible Society. The establishment of a society in Paisley for the support of Gaelic Missions, was to me a new source of most pleasant feeling ; and I rejoiced that God was allowing me to see so much of that good in reference to the Highlanders, which, however eagerly I had desired, I had scarcely dared to hope for."

In this plain account which Mr Brown gives of the deep interest he felt in the religious state of the Highlanders, he very modestly omits all mention of the active part which he himself took in the benevolent exertions to which he refers ; and yet this was very considerable and important. As his friend and correspondent, the late W. M'Gavin, Esq., in the postscript to his Introductory Essay to the Memorials of the Nonconformist Ministers, truly says, " He was ever devising plans for getting the Gospel sent to the Highlands ; he was constantly stirring up evangelical ministers, in different parts of the north and west, to increased activity in preaching the Gospel, and instructing the people." In short, as Mr M'Gavin expresses his belief, there is perhaps no one individual to whom

our Highland population are so much indebted for the means of grace they are now favoured with as to Mr Brown. "It gives me pleasure," says another of his correspondents, who had access to know the facts of the case, in a letter to him, "that you are still vigorous, and as zealous as ever in the important concern of evangelizing the Highlands. You must receive high delight from the interest which it has now excited among all classes of Christians, from the recollection that you were the instrument mainly of exciting it."

As early as the year 1799, he engaged single handed almost in the work of getting translated, and printed in Gaelic, his father's excellent and well known Catechisms. The expense attending this important undertaking, he was enabled to defray by some collections which he made, and the liberality of a number of religious and benevolent friends, who either gave donations for that purpose, or made considerable purchases of the Catechisms. He was directly and responsibly engaged in the publication of at least two editions of 3000 each. The importance of such a work cannot be estimated at a low rate, especially when it is considered, that, at the period when the publication took place, there were exceedingly few religious books, elementary, or of any kind, in the Gaelic language. It was the turning of a stream, small indeed, but rich and refreshing, which had flowed with the most beneficial effects through the whole of the lowland country, and "sending it into the valleys, and

making it run among the hills," of the dry and parched Highlands. He had a very active hand also, though not alone, in promoting the translation and publication of Boston's Fourfold State in Gaelic, which was printed in 1811. In concert with some ministers of the Established Church and among the Dissenters, anxiously concerned, as he himself expresses it, for the everlasting welfare of the inhabitants of the North and West Highlands, he exerted himself in raising the requisite funds for translating, and carrying the work through the press. He collected, it appears, for this purpose, among his friends and acquaintances, £50. The copy presented by the translator to Mr Brown bears, that he gave much countenance and support to the translating of the work. This work has now passed through some editions, and bids fair, as appears from Mr Brown's correspondence with persons in the Highlands, to be as useful in its Gaelic as in its English form.

About the year 1807 or 1808, his attention was directed to the state of those Highlanders who passed by his house to the south, either to harvest or with cattle. He purchased tracts, and procured from the agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society donations of Scriptures, which, along with the Catechisms he had printed, he distributed among them, and he had the satisfaction of seeing them well received. "From experience I can say," he says, in his "Means of Doing Good," "such presents are generally received with a gra-

titude which shews that they are highly valued and intimates that they will be carefully improved." After it became known among those Highland drovers and shearers who passed along that road, that he had Catechisms and Tracts in their own language to dispose of, they came, especially on their return homewards, in crowds sometimes to receive them. It was an interesting spectacle, I have often heard the members of his family say, to see the kitchen crowded with earnest applicants from a far country for the bread of life, and he affectionately distributing it among them. It was at an early period of this benevolent intercourse with the Highlanders, that he made that discovery of the gross ignorance of our Highland population to which he refers in a preceding extract, a considerable portion of them being unable to read.

In reviewing the dispensations of Providence, one has often occasion to admire the wonderful connections and dependencies which subsist among events, to observe how, from a very minute occurrence, leading on to, and connecting itself with, others which might seem at first sight remote, very important results sometimes arise. This was remarkably the case in the present instance. These private, and comparatively obscure, efforts on the part of Mr Brown, to supply the means of religious instruction to his Highland countrymen, tended not indirectly, in union with some other kindred efforts, to awaken that deep interest in the state of the Highlands which subsequently became so ge-

neral, and led to the establishment of the Gaelic School Society, and other similar institutions. I observe, in looking over a correspondence carried on between Mr Brown's brother, the Rev. Ebenezer Brown, Inverkeithing, and the Rev. Mr Charles of Bala, that the first germ of the idea of teaching the Highlanders to read the Scriptures in their own language, was in a letter from Mr Charles, dated August 26. 1809, in answer to a joint letter from the two brothers, proffering their father's Catechism for his use, and communicating information respecting the state of the Highlands, and their efforts in behalf of them. The idea, when suggested by Mr Charles, from his own successful experience in Wales, was not allowed to sleep. Mr Ebenezer Brown carried on an extensive correspondence upon the subject with the late Rev. Dr M'Intosh of Tain, and with other friends of the Highlands. His brother, whose impressions of the necessitous state of the Highland population appear to have been at this time deepened, by a publication of Mr M'Gavin of Glasgow, warmly aided the hallowed design by notices in the Magazines, and other means. Mr Charles also pressed the subject upon the attention of Mr Robert Steven of London. For a while, however, it seemed as if the good design would never be realized. But Mr Brown was not of a temper of mind to be easily disheartened by the want of immediate success. He would often cheer on his brother to persevering exertion, notwithstanding the discouragements

which obstructed their progress, by reminding him of a remark of Mr Charles's, that when they had made sure of the goodness of the end, they ought never to desist from using the means. He always felt persuaded that, in due time, they would reap if they fainted not. At length, accordingly, the little leaven which had been hid in the meal began to produce its natural effects. A fermentation became visible. The friends of religion and of the Highlands, under the influence of the impulse which had been given, began to move, and at first independently of each other, in their behalf. Ultimately a meeting was held in Edinburgh, through means of the late Dr Charles Stuart, Dr Peddie, the late Dr Hall, Mr Christopher Anderson, which also Mr Brown attended, when the foundation of the Gaelic Society was laid. The Society was formally instituted in the beginning of the year 1811, the declared object of it being "to teach the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands to read the Scriptures in their native language." Such was the important issue of those small beginnings to which reference has been made. Mr Charles himself, though he had seen so much under his own eye in Wales, was pleasingly surprised at the successful turn which things had taken with respect to the Highlands. Writing to his correspondent Mr Brown of Inverkeithing, immediately after the formation of the Gaelic Society, he says: "Little did I conceive, when I wrote to you respecting the state of the Highlanders, what the issue of our cor-

respondence would be. I am extremely happy that the work is begun, not doubting but, by the blessing of the Lord on the day of small things, we may confidently expect great things in the Lord's good time." In the operations of the new Society, the subject of this Memoir, as might be expected, from the part he had taken in bringing the subject of Gaelic education before the public, felt and shewed at all times a deep interest, and enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing them crowned with sensible success. In a letter to his friend the Rev. Donald Fraser, dated in October 1821, he thus writes: "The Gaelic Committee met on Monday evening after the Synod. I hope we will interest as many prayers as possible among our congregations and friends in favour of the poor Highlanders. I have occasion to see many of them at this time of the year coming home from England, where they had driven their cattle. We observe a great difference to the better since the Gaelic schools and missions took place."

After seeing the Gaelic Society instituted, and in successful operation, and thus one of the objects which lay near his heart in behalf of his Highland countrymen accomplished, he immediately turned his attention to another, hardly less important, and intimately connected with that one, namely, the supplying the reading population of the Highlands with more extensive means of reading than they enjoyed. It occurred to him that the establishment of English and Gaelic village or district li-

braries would be most important auxiliaries to the schools and missions in operation. With this new object in view, he plyed with equal assiduity the same means which he, in concert with his fellow-labourers in the work, had so successfully employed in reference to the subject of Gaelic education. It occupies a prominent place in his correspondence, especially from the year 1813, and was brought into public view by him in various forms, in the different religious periodicals of the day. Where he had the slightest prospect of succeeding, either with individuals or societies, he made direct application for pecuniary assistance, and, where nothing else could be asked or expected, he made application for prayer. Thus, writing ^{to} a minister respecting the Highlanders, he says:—“Please scatter the inclosed papers among some praying people of your congregation, that they may lift up their voice to the throne of heavenly grace for our long neglected countrymen.” It has been already mentioned, that he brought the subject, to a limited extent, before the religious public in London, by means of a printed circular, in the year 1813. In that paper he states, that the object of the application was to “enable the committee in Edinburgh, consisting of the Reverend Dr Johnstone, Dr Colquhoun, James Peddie, and Thomas Aitchison, to circulate the religious works that had been translated into Gaelic, at reduced prices, or gratuitously,” as the necessity of the case might require. He obtained eventually from this

quarter, for this favourite object, about L. 80. From many of the religious friends to whom he applied, for the more general purpose of providing English as well as Gaelic reading, he received liberal donations of money and books, with cheering expressions of their hearty good-will to the cause. A religious London bookseller (Mr Nisbet), on transmitting to him ten guineas worth of books for this purpose, says: "It was in my heart to do something in the way you mention when I received your application, and have therefore much pleasure in sending as per annexed list, and trust the Lord will bless the reading of these books, to the edification of many, and the awakening of some of our poor countrymen in the Highlands. I rejoice in what you and others are doing for them." But he was not satisfied with private individual applications. He twice appealed to the religious public from the press in behalf of the destitute Highlanders; first by his "Account of a Tour to the Highlands of Perthshire in 1818," and afterwards by his "Loud Cry from the Highlands," a tract which shews, as Mr M'Gavin expresses it, "how much his heart was occupied in devising means for the evangelizing of his countrymen." By these means, along with the efforts of other pious and benevolent individuals embarked in the same cause, the public attention was so drawn to the important subject, that a considerable number of books, and some sums of money, were sent in from different quarters to Edinburgh, where the committee met,

on the 28th December 1819, and set up five libraries for the Highlands of Perthshire. Mr Brown was, however, indebted principally for the ability to carry his benevolent design into effect, to the munificence of that liberal minded and highly gifted individual James Douglas, Esq. of Cavers, who put into his hands L. 70, to be applied by him to this purpose in the manner he should see best. By means of these various aids, he was enabled to found a very considerable number of parish and district libraries, which have been, there is reason to think, the source of much good already, and may prove in the time to come centres from which the light of Divine truth shall emanate to the surrounding parts of that dark region of our country. By the letters received, these assortments of religious books were received with great gratitude, acknowledged, in some instances, as "seasonable and invaluable gifts to the poor people," and blessings heaped upon the heads of the liberal donor, and the worthy distributor, while earnest applications were made for additional ones. Along with these, Mr Brown exerted himself to procure supplies of Gaelic Bibles and Testaments, and sent also donations of Catechisms.

While engaged in providing books for the Highlands, his attention was not unnaturally attracted to the wants of the Orkney Islands. Having learned, in the course of the year 1828, from one of the preachers belonging to the United Associate Synod, who had been appointed there, the desti-

tute state of several of the Islands in regard to religious reading, he took an immediate opportunity, as his manner was, of writing a letter to a religious person there, of whom he had received a favourable report, and accompanied his letter with a number of books for circulation, suggesting, at the same time, the propriety of making the religious wants of Orkney known through means of the religious magazines. His correspondent, after acknowledging his receipt of the letter and the books, adds : “ I am at a loss how I shall express my gratitude for such a great favour and attention. We are at a great loss, in many places in Orkney, for religious books, but particularly in the district of country in which I live.” Afterwards, and only a short time before his death, he procured, by means of some religious friends in Glasgow, a library for the Island of Westray, which was placed under the care of the Reverend George Reid, a faithful and zealous minister on the island.

But extensive as the Highlands and his own country were, as a field of labour, his attention and Christian activity were not confined to these. Having a large portion of that Christian charity “ which glows with social tenderness and feels for all mankind,” he availed himself of every opening for doing good, wherever it might be, which presented itself. He manifested an active interest in the spread of religion in England. The activity of Dr Stewart of Liverpool, and the North of England Association, in the erec-

tion of stations and congregations in the destitute parts of the country, gave him great pleasure, which he expressed in his accustomed style, by writing to Dr Stewart, and sending two parcels of books to aid in the formation of missionary libraries at the preaching stations. Dr Stewart thus acknowledges the receipt of these : “ I duly received,” he says (October 15. 1830), “ your two letters, and two parcels of books, and have complied with your request regarding the distribution of the latter. I have felt highly honoured and encouraged by your condescending and encouraging communication, and feel deeply convinced of the vast importance of your recommendation. Nothing appears to me so promising, in the present state of this kingdom, as itinerating libraries of the kind you mention, visiting from house to house, prayer meetings for mutual intercourse, lending useful tracts, and replacing them by others at regular periods, connected with the preaching of the gospel.”

In the same spirit, and upon the same principle, he extended his benevolent attentions to Nova Scotia. Through a friend and correspondent there, the late Reverend Hugh Graham, he sent repeatedly donations of books and catechisms to the settlers. In the letters of that truly excellent christian and minister to Mr Brown, now lying before the writer of these pages, there are frequent and very grateful references to various donations of this kind which had been received from him.

In one of these, Mr Graham says : “ My people, as well as myself, are under great obligations to you and other friends for the bountiful supply.” His manner, when he could not meet the applications that were made to him from his own resources, was to recommend them to the attention of some of his benevolent Christian friends. Thus, in reference to some hints that Mr Graham had thrown out respecting their want of catechisms and a printing press, he says, in a letter to one of his friends : “ I got a letter from Nova Scotia for catechisms and a printing press. Providence has brought to my hand a large parcel of catechisms, and a Mrs Weir in this neighbourhood, a good lady, speaks of buying a printing press.” The lady carried her benevolent intention and his suggestion into effect ; and thus, through her means, Mr Brown was enabled to confer a most important benefit upon that colony. Mr Graham, in his letter of acknowledgment, calls it “ an invaluable donation.” In the same way, when the Reverend Mr Bell, now of Perth, Upper Canada, embarked for America, Mr Brown procured, and sent along with him, a supply of tracts and catechisms, He had it not in his power to do magnificent acts of charity, but he did what he could.

The following extract from a letter he addressed to the Reverend Cesar Malan, when he was in this country, but which never reached him, will shew how much he was ever upon the alert to do good, lying in wait, as it were, for opportunities of use-

fulness, and improving them, when they were presented, with the utmost alacrity and vigour: "A proposal was sent me from Mr William Brown, bookseller, Aberdeen, who had been on the Continent, and conversed with some religious people in Geneva, that you should translate Boston's Fourfold State into French. This I encouraged, and also others in Edinburgh. I should much wish this good design set about soon. No book known among us is more fit to instruct in the principles of religion, and be a means of bringing men to a Saviour. I have often thought the printing, in modern French, some sermons or addresses of Calvin, Beza, and other famous men in Geneva, might have a good effect to bring back the people to the scriptural faith of their fathers, and comfort and direct those who know the truth. I saw lately some sermons of Francis Turretine, in French, preached in Geneva. Were these, in single sermons, or parts of them, published in small books and tracts, under the blessing of God, they might be the power of God unto the salvation of many. Also, were the confessions and catechisms of Geneva spread, they might have the same good influence. I believe your Redeemer will be your friend, and I hope you will meet with many kind friends in Edinburgh."

In his "Means of Doing Good," Mr Brown recommends christians and ministers to direct their attention to particular classes of their fellow creatures, such as sailors and soldiers. His own situa-

tion, in an inland part of the country, did not bring him into immediate contact with either of these classes. In the course, however, of his occasional visits to Leith, for the purpose of sea-bathing, his attention was drawn to the destitute state of the former of these interesting classes, and, with him, to have his attention drawn to a scene of exertion, and to labour in it, was almost the same thing. The association that was formed among the ministers in his neighbourhood for prayer, about the year 1795, and of which he was not one of the least active members, published, among other tracts which they issued, "An Address to Sailors." Whether he had any hand in the formation of the Leith Seaman's Friend Society, the writer does not know; but, when formed, he took a deep and peculiar interest in its welfare, and gave to it all the countenance and support in his power. He was hardly ever in Edinburgh or Leith without preaching to the sailors, and appears even to have made journeys on purpose for this end. He thus writes to a friend in Leith: "In a letter to Messrs H. and A., I hinted that I was much concerned for the Seaman's Friend Society, and though I have plenty of work here, week-day and Sabbath-day, yet, if it was thought needful, I would not grudge to give a Sabbath to it." His labours among the sailors were very acceptable, and there is reason to believe also successful. The writer has heard of a sermon of his, upon the text "Ye are a peculiar people," accom-

modated to the circumstances of the sailors, which produced a very deep impression. He spoke of them as a people inhabiting peculiar houses, having peculiar manners, speaking a peculiar language; from which he took occasion to express his fears that the peculiarity of their language and manners was not always a good peculiarity, but often the contrary.

To these instances of Mr Brown's active endeavours to promote the diffusion of religion in the world at large, there ought to be added the equally active, and at least not less disinterested, efforts which he made to promote it in his own immediate neighbourhood. There is perhaps nothing which a minister feels more than what goes to the diminution of his congregation. Many who would not hesitate to make sacrifices of time, and labour, and money, to promote the cause of the gospel, will shrink back when the sacrifice required is a part of their congregation. Mr Brown, however, though he felt as much as any minister could in reference to the flourishing circumstances of his people, was above this unworthy feeling. Wherever the preaching of the gospel seemed necessary, there he was active in using means to procure it, and this without any regard to the manner in which it was to affect himself. Besides actively aiding in the formation of two congregations within the bounds of his own, and which of course detached a considerable number of hearers and members from his ministry, he himself, with the

sanction of his presbytery, erected a preaching station in another corner of it, which he watched over with a fatherly care, procuring supply, and even pecuniary assistance for it.

In forming an estimate of Mr Brown's *public* labours in the cause of religion, the lowest place is not to be assigned to the numerous and varied efforts which he made to diffuse correct and evangelical views of christian truth. He was one who laid great stress upon the soundness of a man's faith. Clear and accurate views of the doctrines of the gospel, he justly reckoned the only solid foundation on which the superstructure of a christian character, and a christian life, could be built. It was his opinion, too, that the writings of the modern divines were not in general the best fitted to impart such views. While he was by no means insensible to their superiority, in point of taste and logical arrangement, over the productions of the Old School of Divinity, he thought, and he had too good reason for thinking, that they were in many instances dry and superficial. Under these impressions, it became one of the grand favourite objects of his life and ministry, to bring into notice, and propagate, the religious views of the Nonconformists of England, and "the Marrow" divines of Scotland, as being, in his judgment, those of the New Testament. He enthusiastically admired them himself, and he spared no pains, neglected no means, to communicate the same enthusiastic admiration of them to others. On all occasions, in the course

of his private intercourse, as well as in his public ministration, he took every proper opportunity of recommending the writings of these distinguished men. To ministers, to private Christians, to congregational and other libraries, he suggested such books of this description as seemed suitable to them. He also inserted commendatory notices to the same effect in the different religious magazines. And this not once or occasionally but often. It is, indeed, almost amusing to observe the ingenuity and the perseverance with which he pressed this subject into notice, and in what varied forms. I believe there is hardly a religious publication of any kind in the country in which notices of this kind, from him, may not be found. Sometimes he inserts a recommendation of his own, sometimes an extracted recommendation from some author of name. At one time, he pursues his end by giving biographical sketches of these eminent ministers and writers; at another, by inserting descriptive lists of their principal works. Nothing seemed to give him higher pleasure than to talk about these worthy men and hear them praised, and scarcely any thing occasioned him more uneasiness or pain than to witness any thing like obloquy cast upon their characters or writings. The writer remembers, in particular, how exceedingly hurt and grieved he was at the reflections which were cast upon "the Marrow of Modern Divinity" in the debates in the General Assembly on Mr Campbell's case, and especially at the sanction that was given by that Court to the Act

of 1720, condemning the doctrines of the Marrow, by making it the ground of their condemnation, of what was called the *Row Heresy*.—" You will have read," he says, in a letter to a neighbour minister, " the history of the condemnation of what is called the Row Heresy, by the General Assembly. I by no means adopt any part of it, but wonder at the haste the Assembly was in,—their misunderstanding the assurance of faith, and denying assurance to be in the nature of faith,—and their connecting that part of the heresy with *the Marrow*, which they represent as an Antinomian piece. I have no fear but the Redeemer will take care of his truth, and make it shine full bright, yet the present assertions will have effect on some."

In his latter years especially he exerted himself to a great extent to procure the republication of those precious treasures of practical divinity, which lay concealed in the scarce or inaccessible volumes of the Puritan and Nonconformist writers. This was an object upon which his heart was very much set. He always thought that these old writers only needed to be known in order to have the truly sterling qualities of their works appreciated. While he well knew that their style and manner were such as a squeamish refinement of literary taste would revolt at, it was his opinion, that the rich vein of evangelical doctrine which runs through them, the pointed, beautiful, and striking thoughts which sparkle in almost every page, and the highly practical character which distinguish the whole, would,

in the estimation of Christians in general, he held amply to redeem whatever otherwise might be felt defective or amiss. And having once formed his opinion, and taken up his ground, he did not allow himself to be driven from his point by discouragements. "I have in my recollection," says one who was on the most intimate terms of friendship with him, "at this moment, certain instances in which his attempts to bring forward the Old Nonconformist and Puritan writers were treated with a coldness and neglect which would have dispirited less ardent and less persevering minds, but did not (though they vexed and disappointed him) suggest the most distant idea of slackening or abandoning his exertions." He brought the subject repeatedly before the view of the public, especially directed the attention of religious booksellers to the subject, and if, at any time, he heard of a publisher engaged in the work, he would immediately write an encouraging letter to him, and even take several copies at the risk, or even certainty, of losing by them. And there is little doubt, that, by these persevering, and I may almost say pertinacious, efforts, he has contributed not a little to bring into notice the names and writings of these, in many cases, almost forgotten worthies. He enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing the great object of his desires gradually advancing towards its accomplishment. He would often remark, with visible animation and a kind of triumph, that there was now a resurrection of the witnesses. At the time of his death he was enga-

ged in preparing for the press some of the most striking and characteristic extracts from their writings, under the title of "Memorials of the Non-conformists," which has been since published, with a prefatory essay by his friend the author of "the Protestant," who soon after followed him into the eternal world.

To the same great object of diffusing what he reckoned correct views of gospel truth he dedicated the labours of his pen. Every one of his publications is made the vehicle, more or less directly, of conveying to the world his own peculiar views of evangelical doctrine. He wrote and published not for gain, nor to gratify the ruling appetite of the day. The publication of *Nonconformist* and *Marrow Divinity* was not the way to do either. He had simply in view to spread more extensively those truths which he found to be the life of his own soul, and which he dispensed every Sabbath with like effect to his people. His publications were of two classes. The first consisted of those in which he acted merely as an Editor ; the second, of those of which the Authorship belonged to him.

As an editor, he published, in three volumes, *The Evangelical Preacher*, an excellent selection of doctrinal and practical discourses, from the works of eminent evangelical divines of the last century. He, along with some others, actively superintended the publication of five volumes of original sermons from Boston's manuscripts. He edited also two volumes of *Religious Letters*, one of them ad-

dressed to the young, besides several other minor pieces. In addition to what he did in this way himself, he was most assiduous in exciting and encouraging the publication of similar, or original, works of a like description by others; and when published, of recommending and aiding their sale. He was always forward to communicate whatever information he possessed which could be useful in such cases, and, where he approved of the work, to lend his name and influence to promote its circulation. Those who laboured in the same field, and were engaged in the same work with himself,—of bringing into public notice the writings, and the memories, of those men whom he most venerated,—he regarded not as rivals but as co-adjutors, and felt himself honoured in receiving from them, and giving to them the right hand of fellowship. In their labours and works he felt an interest hardly less deep, and took a hand in promoting them hardly less active, than if they had been his own. “I have read over,” he says, in a letter to the author of the *Life of Ebenezer Erskine* on its publication, “*Ebenezer Erskine’s Life* with great pleasure, and with pain that I am so far behind. He had been a most eminent christian, as well as divine. O that Seceder ministers, and others, may follow in his footsteps. I fear *I longed too much* to see it, but have not been disappointed. I hope Mr Moncreiff’s descendants will give an account of him, and of his son. They were excellent men.”

But if he served the cause of evangelical truth as an editor, he served it still more as an author. He made no pretensions, indeed, to the name of an original writer. He assumed no higher title to himself than that of a compiler; but if the value of writings is to be judged of by their usefulness, his *Compilations*, as he always modestly called his writings, will rank higher than many which are characterised by a greater shew of originality. He had the satisfaction of knowing that his publications not only sold, although he derived little or no pecuniary advantage from them, but that they had proved in many cases decidedly useful.

His first and most successful work was his *Memoirs of Hervey*. It was first published in the year 1806. He had contracted an early liking to this distinguished minister and writer from reading his *Theron and Aspasio*. The decidedly evangelical cast of the sentiments, which exactly accorded with Mr Brown's own, and not the mere beauty of the style, although to this he was by no means insensible, rendered Hervey one of his favourite Authors. The plan upon which he constructed the Memoir was, to make Mr Hervey as much as possible speak for himself, by selecting, as he expresses it in the preface, "the most interesting and characteristic passages from his letters, and arranging them under proper heads, and thus presenting, in one view, a picture of the life and character of this excellent divine and eminent christian, undesignedly drawn by himself." The

numerous letters, either published or accessible, which Mr Hervey had written, illustrative of his christian views and experience, and the occasional personal references of the same description in his works, which seems first to have suggested the idea of the work, furnished him with ample materials for carrying the design into effect. With what success he executed his design may be inferred from the favourable reception the work has met with from the christian public. It had, previously to Mr Brown's death, passed through three editions, and been, besides, published, in an abridged form, by the Tract Society of London, in their Biographical Series,—a measure of success which he devoutly ascribed to God, and valued chiefly as subserving the cause of truth and piety. “I am much indebted,” he says, in a letter, “to Divine favour, for making any attempt at public service acceptable. Another edition of Hervey's Memoir is desired. O that it may be useful to spread gospel doctrine in its power.” The work unquestionably contains, as the reviewer in the Evangelical Magazine expresses it, “a rich collection of evangelical truth, enhanced by a great variety of interesting incident and anecdote.” Mr Brown enjoyed the satisfaction of knowing that this Memoir had been extensively useful. About a twelvemonth only before his death, he learned, from the individual himself, of its having been blessed for the conversion of an officer in India, a piece of intelligence which, as may be readily supposed, refreshed his heart and revived his spirits.

The second work which Mr Brown published was, " Gospel Truth Stated and Illustrated." The first edition of this was published in 1817. Mr Brown's object in this publication was threefold : to give a historical account of what is commonly denominated the Marrow Controversy ; biographical sketches of the Twelve Brethren who embarked in defence of the doctrines of the Marrow ; and a statement and illustration of the doctrines which formed the subject of the controversy, and for which these brethren contended, in the words of the Marrow men themselves. The controversy, it is well known, originated in the republication in Scotland of " The Marrow of Modern Divinity," and its condemnation, in 1720, by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The doctrines of The Marrow, and which were impugned by the Assembly's act of condemnation, involved points of such vital importance as the following :—That all who hear the Gospel are warranted to believe it,—that appropriation is included in the nature of saving faith,—that holiness, while necessary, is in no sense the price or meritorious condition of salvation,—that acceptable obedience to the divine law originates in love,—that believers are not under the law as a covenant of works, in respect either of its promise, precept, or penalty,—and that the law, as a covenant of works, is quite distinct from the law as a rule of life. In Mr Brown's apprehension, the cause of The Marrow was the cause of Gospel truth, and the Marrow doctrine, as one

of his friends truly expresses, was the warm and living solace of his heart. With such views and impressions, therefore, upon the subject, he was naturally desirous of preserving the memory of those who had distinguished themselves in the cause, and especially of exhibiting and preserving the truths for which they had so honourably and successfully contended. And this he has been enabled to do in his "Gospel Truth." He has there brought together and presented, in an orderly and luminous point of view, every thing of essential importance to the understanding of the subject. Indeed, the work forms a very complete system of Gospel doctrine, upon the principles of The Marrow, and the Marrow men. Mr Brown had the satisfaction, not only of receiving valuable testimonies to the importance and excellence of his publication, but of knowing that in some instances it had been the means of leading individuals whose views were erroneous or confused, into a more correct mode of thinking upon the great subject of the Gospel. A second edition of this work having been published the year before died, he thus writes respecting it to his friend, the Reverend Donald Frazer : " I hope," he says, " you will help me in praying that the new edition of Gospel Truth may not only be acceptable, but remarkably useful to many. I think now is the time to spread true gospel doctrine. I think the coincidence of Mr Ebenezer's life being published along with Gospel Truth, wherein that great and good man appears

so prominently as a peculiar providence, for I wished it done some years ago."

The next work which deserves particular mention, was his "Means of Doing Good," which was published in 1820. The subject of this publication was one which was as much in unison with his feelings and habits, as that of the two others was with his theological views. Indeed, the book is very much a transcript and picture of his own benevolently active life. The directions which he gives to others are, for the most part, the results of his own experience. He recommends what he had himself exemplified. The design and nature of the work he thus himself describes. "It has often," he says, "been a subject of regret with the author that, in a world where there is so much good to be done, and, comparatively speaking, so little inclination to do it, the disposition to do good, which does exist among all the saints, should be turned but to little account, from ignorance or mistake respecting the best methods of displaying it. In the following letters he has collected together such information as, in the course of his reading, appeared to him fitted for the direction and encouragement of christians in the great work of doing good, adding such hints as his own experience and observation suggested, and adapting all to the peculiar characters of that interesting period in which Providence has ordered our lot. By the plan and design of the publication, all claims to originality are superseded. Usefulness

is the sole object in view, and if this is in any degree gained, the author will consider the hours devoted to this compilation as well employed, and the labour bestowed on it as abundantly rewarded."

These are the only works of Mr Brown of which it seems necessary to give a particular account. An accurate list of all his publications, in the order in which they appeared, will be found at the end of this Memoir.

GENERAL CHARACTER AND HABITS.

WHEN we see a piece of mechanism, the powers and working of which are in any way remarkable, we naturally feel desirous to examine the internal structure, and observe how the effect has been produced. The same feeling exists, and operates in reference to persons of more than ordinary attainments and usefulness. What, we naturally ask, were the foundations on which the superstructure of such a varied and efficient life was raised? Now, in the case of Mr Brown, it will be found that these foundations did not lie very deep, that the mechanism which produced the results was neither gigantic in its size nor complex in its construction. His character, if distinguished for any one thing more than another, was distinguished for its great simplicity. He thought, and felt, and spake, and acted, just as nature prompted, and in

no respect affected any thing extraordinary, or out of the common way.

The characteristic qualities of his mind naturally claim our attention, in the first place, here. These, in the case of every individual, form the basis of the character, and give to it, its peculiar cast and shape. In Mr Brown's case there were three natural qualities of mind, which visibly stood out from the rest, and the influence of which may be distinctly traced in all that he accomplished. These were benevolence, activity, and perseverance. No one could be acquainted with him without often having his attention drawn to what were obviously and unequivocally the workings of a benevolent mind. He was naturally and constitutionally *a man of feeling*. He could not witness misery in any individual without being instinctively moved with compassion, and making an effort to relieve it. Under any circumstances, and even though destitute of religion, he would have been a philanthropist; benevolence would have formed the main-spring, the actuating and animating principle of his life: but as it was, he became a christian philanthropist. The original benevolence of his nature, purified and heightened by "the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart," expressed itself in pity for the souls as well as the bodies of men, and in earnest endeavours to do good to both, and became the grand impelling governing motive in all that he did. The operation of this original principle of his nature appeared in the character of his

preaching, the direction of his public efforts, and even in the very tone and style of his conversation. The object in all was to do good.

But he was not merely benevolent, he was *actively* benevolent. He possessed naturally an activity which, without any exaggeration, might be said never to have tired or flagged. Idle he could not be. Action was his very element and life. Had he ceased to labour, he would have ceased to live. He rose always early in the morning, and, with the industrious labourer, "he went forth to his work, and to his labour until the evening." There were no vacuities in his time, all was filled up in some way or other—was occupied, as he himself often expressed it, either "in doing good or in getting good." He possessed beyond most the happy and invaluable art of "redeeming the time." Never could you see him but engaged on some object; and even the smaller shreds and odd ends of time were turned by him to some profitable account or other. His head was always full of schemes of usefulness, and his hands always full of work. To use an expression of his own, or perhaps rather of Boston's, he had always "his nets set." It is absolutely inconceivable what a number of plans and hints for doing good, his memorandums abounded with. He had always upon his desk small slips of paper, on which he noted down whatever occurred to him as necessary or proper to be done; and these jottings, as far as they can be made out, have, for the most part, a reference to some scheme or

other of active religious benevolence. Nor did his activity, like that of some people, evaporate in forming a multiplicity of schemes of usefulness. To plan and to execute was with him almost one and the same thing. Whatever his hands found to do he did ; and did with all his might. He could not rest when an object was presented to him worthy of his attention, till he had used every means in his power to gain it. Trouble he counted nothing upon. The writing of letters, the making of journeys, the laying out of expense, and the submitting to personal inconvenience and fatigue, in order to accomplish the objects he had in view, were matters of such frequent occurrence, that they scarcely ever cost him a thought. It deserves, however, mention here, that there was nothing like bustle or parade about his activity. While, like his Divine Master, he went commonly about “ doing good ;” like Him, too, “ he did not strive, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.” Though he was ever in motion, doing something, his step was so light and soft, as to create no noise, nor draw towards it any marked attention. His activity was conspicuous only by the progress he made in doing good.

Mr Brown was not less distinguished naturally for *perseverance* than for activity. In the union of these two qualities, which are seldom found together in the same person, the great secret of his usefulness lay. Many persons possessing more abundantly the means of doing good than he did,

had more splendid gifts, greater wealth, more commanding influence ; but the possession by him of an activity which scarcely ever rested, and a perseverance which hardly any failures or opposition could weary out or overcome, more than compensated for the want of these. Difficulties, which would have deterred persons in ordinary circumstances, had little or no effect upon him. Any scheme or enterprise which appeared to him to be a good and a proper one, he unweariedly laboured to carry into effect. If he failed in one quarter, he tried another. If the present time proved unpropitious, he attempted it at a future one. His motto was "Never despair." Writing to a friend, he says, "I need not say, do all the good you can, and never be discouraged by any want of success, or any awful scandalous behaviour of any. Satan will do his utmost against Christ, but his crown will flourish. Be of good courage." To the same effect, in writing to his brother, who had expressed his fears in reference to some scheme that he had in view for the benefit of the Highlanders, he says, "Never, never give up with a good scheme because it meets with opposition. Persevere, and good will be done ere long." And in very similar terms, he writes thus to one of his sons. "I would not have you to give way to despondency, about the good plan of schools in seceding congregations. Never give up with a good design if at all practicable ; and this surely is so." And in these instances he was only exhorting to what he did him-

self. Whatever indifference, or even opposition, he might have to encounter, he never allowed it to paralyze or stop his exertions. "I do not recollect," says one who intimately knew him, in a letter to the writer, ("and I feel persuaded you do not), a single instance, in which obloquy or opposition deterred him from executing any of his designs." Indeed, instead of being discouraged with opposition, he was accustomed to draw a good omen from it. He often remarked, that his plans seldom succeeded till they excited opposition, but that then he usually noticed they began to prosper. This feature in his character is the more remarkable, as there was a natural timidity about him, amounting to almost a positive infirmity, which clung to him to a certain degree to the last. Often indeed he was baffled and disappointed in the accomplishment of his projects ; but, instead of giving up the contest, he, like a good soldier of Jesus Christ, always returned with renewed vigour to the charge. From some memorandums which happen to be preserved, it appears that some of his favourite objects of pursuit he prosecuted with very uncertain prospects of success for as long as ten, fifteen, or even twenty years. During all that length of time, they were constantly before his mind, forming at intervals the subject of conversation, correspondence, printed notices in the magazines, and continued exertions. As "the water will even wear away the stones," so the unceasing flow of his efforts in the direction of any particular object he had in

view, usually smoothed the way sooner or later to its accomplishment, thus furnishing a new illustration of the assurance which the Apostle gives, that the Christian will in "due time reap if he faint not."

Next to the original characteristic qualities of Mr Brown's mind, the character and properties of his religion claim attention. If the former constituted the basis of his character, the latter certainly formed the principal modifying elements of it. Religion in him was not, as it is in the case of very many, the mere outward dress of the mind. It was so inwrought, as it were, into the very frame and texture of it, so mixed up with all his habits of thinking, and feeling, and acting, that it might be described with truth, as a part of his nature. Religion considered in itself, and with respect to its essential elements, is in all genuine Christians one and the same. It is one and the same river of the water of life, "which flows through the hearts of the countless myriads of the Redeemed. But as in a natural river the body of water, which composes it, though the same unchanged liquid mass during the whole length of its course, exhibits a different appearance in different localities, becoming broad, or narrow, shallow, or deep, slow or rapid, according to the declivity and shape of the channel, so is it with vital religion. It accommodates itself, so to speak, to, and takes its external form from, the mental characters and outward circumstances of the persons in whom it operates, so that the religion of almost every individual has something

peculiar and characteristic about it. Now such characteristic peculiarities Mr Brown's religion possessed and exhibited.

It was an operative religion. It was not a religion of mere thought and feeling. He thought indeed, and felt deeply upon the all-important subject. Its truths and realities appeared to occupy and engross his thoughts, and wholly engage his feelings. But his religion terminated not there. It flowed out in manifold active exertions, while the stream of some people's religion is mostly distinguished by its glassy placidity,—is abundantly smooth, but hardly in motion; Mr Brown's was chiefly distinguished by its clear, but *quick* run. It was operative rather than contemplative. It has appeared sometimes to me not a little singular, that though religion was the element in which he breathed, and the subject in one form or other of his constant thoughts and conversation, he has left nothing whatever in the shape of a diary behind him, no occasional record even of his private views and experience. Abundance of memorandums indeed there are of a private kind, but they have all a reference to something to be done. They are registers not of his feelings, but of his plans. But the truth seems to be, that his activity allowed him little leisure for the keeping of a Diary, and his humility prevented him from having the inclination.

But, while his religion was active, it was altogether unostentatious. There was as entire an absence almost as possible of every thing like pride

and vanity. There is in the world a great deal of what may be styled theatrical religion,—the doing of every thing that is done for shew and effect. I have no hesitation in saying that Mr Brown's religion was, in every respect, the reverse. It was very much characterized by the simplicity and modesty of nature. Nothing like art or acting could be detected in it. He *did*, but he did “not to be seen of men;” religious modesty characterized his experience, devotions, and exertions. It was exceedingly seldom that he spoke of his Christian experience, perhaps seldomer than, considering his age and attainments, it was desirable he should; but, when he did speak, it was with the lowliness and the humility of one who thought himself “less than the least.” “As for a sense of sin,” he said upon one occasion to a friend, “I really cannot say that I feel it so overwhelmingly as some good men appear to have done, and I regret my not feeling it more pungently; but, nevertheless, I think, unless that I am greatly mistaken, that I love the blessed Redeemer, and his work, and his cause, and every thing about him.” The former part of the sentence, remarks the friend to whom he thus addressed himself, was spoken in an unaffected tone of deep humility and self-abasement; while the latter part was delivered in a manner which shewed how necessary, and how natural, holy love had become to him. In the same spirit of deep humility, he thus writes of himself to another friend, “Your letters are always agreeable to me; but, oh! W., do not think too highly of me,

who, I am sure, am a poor unworthy sinner, and if I can but get in behind the backs of the ransomed in the upper house, I will think it an unspeakable favour." And the same modesty which characterized his Christian experience, characterized also his devotions. There was less of what may be called the parade of devotion about his prayers, than about those of most. I have been oftentimes struck with the extreme brevity of his family worship, as compared with the length of time he appeared to occupy in his closet. He was, perhaps, more than ordinarily short in the former. He was certainly more than ordinarily long in the latter. One who had access to know him very intimately, thus refers to this peculiarity, in a letter to the writer. "You probably know that, though generally so brief when engaged in religious exercises with others, his private devotions were more than ordinarily deliberate; at least, I am sure of this with regard to his perusal of the Scriptures. Once, when I happened to be with him, at a very early hour in the morning, he requested me to read to him several chapters in various places, obviously according to a settled method of perusing the sacred volume." And, in the religious exertions which he made, humility and modesty were as conspicuous as in his devotions or experience. Although he was so actively engaged in so many good works, there was never any thing like a pushing of himself forward in the scene of action, nor when he had accomplished any good, of eagerly claiming to himself the credit of it. His object always was rather

to do good than to get the praise of it ; and, if the good was done, he rejoiced, whether he had been honoured to do it or not. Though in labours he was more abundant, and though consequently his many and various efforts could not be hid, he was always more disposed to cast himself and them into the shade, than to boast of them. Instead of sounding a trumpet before him as the hypocrites did, or Jehu like, saying, " Come see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts," he spoke seldom of what he himself did, but was always forward to commend the labours of others. In some instances he unaffectedly gave to others the credit of originating, and carrying into effect, important benevolent designs which many persons thought as justly belonged to himself. He was always willing too, when engaged in any particular work of usefulness, to give the place of honour to others, who might, in his opinion, execute it more successfully, and would even volunteer to serve as an auxiliary instead of acting as a principal. He had long projected a Biographical account of the early Ministers of the Secession, upon the plan of Palmer's Non-Conformist's Memorial, (a work which, from his intimate acquaintance with the characters and histories of the older ministers, he was well qualified for), and had actually prepared materials for its execution. On hearing, however, in 1814, from his brother, that his friend Mr Donald Frazer had a design of the same kind in view, he thus writes to him, " I am sensible of my great defect as to composition,

and, at my time of life, cannot now improve in this respect ; but, having many sources of information from books and manuscripts, I have, in my happy retirement in the winter nights, gathered materials for something of the above sort, especially for Messrs E. and R. Erskine, Moncrieff, Wilson, &c. with some short notices of Scott of Musselburgh, &c. They might be introduced by an account of the rise and progress of the Secession, as softly, and as usefully, and as practically as possible. Now, my dear sir, what I earnestly wish is, that, upon my furnishing you with all the materials I can, and your gathering together others which I have not, you would, as a recreation, cast them into good English, so as to form a book of the size of Mr Swanston's Sermons. I suppose, in almost every instance, our views would be very similar. We might consult with several of our worthy brethren, and, when my scribbles were committed to you, I would have perfect confidence as to the use you would make of them, and give you no trouble."

Mr Brown's religion was also a very cheerful religion. Christians are compared in the New Testament to temples, but, like natural buildings, they are of very different orders of architecture. While some have all the gloom and massiness of the Gothic style about them, others are characterized by the lightness and elegance of the Grecian. Mr Brown's religious character was cast much more in the style of the latter than of the former. There

was nothing like Monkish austerity about it. He was naturally cheerful, and disposed always to look upon the bright side of things, and there was a large infusion of the same temper in his religion. The cheering views of the divine character and administration were those on which his own mind dwelt most frequently, and which he also most frequently brought forward to others. Thus, to one suffering under severe affliction, he writes, "Under a weight of distress, the only relief is, Cast thy burden upon the Lord." To another, who had lost his father, he says, "You have now a new relation in a redeeming God. God is the God of the fatherless, and the orphan's help." "It will affect you much," he says, writing to a third, "to hear that both J. and D. W. are away home to their Father's house. We had need to say, Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth." Few, perhaps, enjoyed more than he did the comforts of religion. Where others could see nothing but the dire prognostications of coming evil, he would detect some propitious omen, something to excite hope, or, at least, to lighten the gloomy forebodings of fear. He had trials of various kinds in the course of his lengthened life; but it was observed that, so far from losing his hope in God, he appeared, during them, to rise above his ordinary equanimity, and occasionally to shew even a sublime calmness of demeanour. A remark which he once made respecting the captive Jews, that "they only *hung* their harps upon the willows and did not *break*

them," expresses what he himself did. His singing might be interrupted by adversity, but it was never stopt. No depth of distress, he thought, was a reason for restraining the delightful exercises of prayer and praise. "We can never," he would sometimes say, "cry to God from such a deep and dark closet as Jonah did." Upon an occasion of very complicated domestic trial, he simply remarks in writing, when from home, to his wife, "God's waves and billows seem of late to have been going over us, but, if God command his loving-kindness in the day time, all will be well." In the same spirit of cheerful resignation, he thus expresses himself respecting the death of an infant son, or grandson, "The death of the dear boy is a loud warning to us, to think of, and prepare for the eternal world. In his case we take infestment of the house appointed for all living." He had, indeed, a strong idea of the necessity of trials, in order to progress in the Christian life, and this would have its influence, there is no doubt, in reconciling his mind to them. "We are just," he once remarked, "like boy's tops. We require to be constantly whipt in order to be kept going." The uniform cheerfulness with which he clothed his religion, conciliated, in a remarkable manner, the attention and affection of the young. It made them love both him and the religion he professed. He conciliated, by this means, even enemies. There have not been many, perhaps, who have had fewer personal enemies than he had. But who is there who has

not some who bear him a hatred? One who had, on some account, taken up an inveterate prejudice against him, once remarked that he “did not know how it was, but it was not possible for a person, however angry he might be with Mr Brown, to continue in an ill humour with him after seeing and conversing with him.”

Fervent charity was another characteristic of Mr Brown's religion. He neither saw nor felt the inconsistency of holding his own religious views firmly, and of extending the right hand of fellowship to those whom he thought to be christians, though they did not in every thing just follow with him. The right of judging which he claimed for himself, he willingly allowed to others. Bigotry and sectarianism he thoroughly detested and hated. There were two sets of principles to which he felt a most devoted attachment,—the principles of the Secession in matters of church polity, and the principles of the Marrow in matters of Gospel doctrine. He was most deliberately and conscientiously a Seceder and a Marrowman. His views were even high rather than otherwise upon the controverted points. But notwithstanding this, he spoke and acted with the utmost charity and liberality, in reference to those who differed with him as to both of these. Some of his most intimate friends were members of the Established Church, and Independent body; and not only did he admit such into the circle of his friends, but into the fellowship of his church. His was not the chris-

tian charity which will recognise persons as saints in the parlour or at the family altar, but treat them as heathen men and publicans at the table of the Lord. It was his opinion, and he acted upon it, that the little differences which exist among true christians, ought not to be allowed to interrupt christian intercourse, or operate as a bar to christian communion. He thought that those who were one in Christ, ought to be united to one another. He was in the habit too of speaking very favourably of the general doctrinal views, and especially of the personal piety, of some of the keenest anti-marrowmen. He was accustomed to impute the virulent attack which Principal Haddow, whom he always spoke of as a good man, made upon "*the Marrow*," to an ungrounded alarm, which he had sincerely taken up, that its doctrines were unfavourable to evangelical holiness. His strong prepossession in favour of that system of doctrine, did not blind him to the excellencies of those who were its bitterest opponents. That he felt or manifested none of the "odium theologicum," would be claiming for him an exemption which even the most charitable of men are not entitled to; but there was certainly in his conversation and writings, as great and unaffected a freedom from it, as can be expected in any ordinary circumstances. "While," says he, in a note to Gospel Truth, "purity of doctrine must be always maintained, whoever should deviate from it, we with pleasure do justice to the characters of several violent anti-

marrowmen ;” and then he mentions with general approbation several of them, adding, “ Principal Haddow left in his closet papers discovering the exercise of a truly pious mind ; among others, a solemn personal covenant.”

And the same christian charity breathed through every part of his deportment, leading him to speak kindly of, and deal kindly to, all with whom he had any connexion. “ It was an amiable trait in his character,” says one of his immediate neighbours and brethren in the ministry, of another denomination, “ which must have forcibly struck every one who had the opportunity of enjoying his conversation, to shew, as he always did, a disposition to speak well of every person whose name happened to be mentioned ; and even when he felt it necessary to condemn the public conduct of individuals, he was always ready to do justice to whatever excellencies appeared in their character.” His charity, like the Apostle’s, “ thought no evil, but believed all things, hoped all things.” He was ever disposed to take the most favourable view of characters as well as things. He was impatient of every thing like detraction, and would not allow it in his presence, checking it by saying, in his own characteristic manner, “ Speak evil of no man.” Upon one occasion, when a preacher, rather censoriously as he thought, was descanting upon the unfitness of a brother preacher for a certain responsible station, characterizing him as soft and simple, Mr Brown said, “ Remember Mr —— God preserveth

the simple." Nor did he think and act charitably only towards his friends; he behaved in the very same manner towards those who reproached and injured him. When one for whom he entertained an unfeigned regard had, under the influence of some misapprehension, written him a very scurrilous letter, he pertinaciously refused, as soon as ever he learned its import, to read it, lest his opinion of his friend should be lowered by it. Referring to the unpleasant incident out of which this arose, he says, in a letter to his son, "I have met with far more honour in the church than I ever deserved, and now I must learn by *his* severe views of my conduct to be abased. I thought I tried in some instances to do him good. The obligation on me now lies stronger, when he seems to think despitefully of me. O to walk softly all our years. I think I have found, for some time past, a more than ordinary desire to do good in the church! I am resolved, however, not to be discouraged by a fiery dart from Satan, through means of a very good man." It deserves to be mentioned, as illustrative of this particular branch of his christian temper, that this individual, though he became eventually altogether estranged from him, was the last person unconnected with his own family whose welfare he inquired after on his death-bed, and when he could only speak in broken accents.

Mr Brown's religion possessed a highly devotional character. He might well be styled, as

Cornelius was, "a devout man." He was often on the mount with God. He was not satisfied with the stated regular periods of morning and evening devotion; he frequently set apart special seasons for wrestling with God in behalf of his friends and the church. Thus, in a letter to a young friend in Leith, he says: "I usually set apart some time, at seven o'clock every Sabbath morning, for praying for my friends in Leith, and all the churches; and I hope you and Messrs W. and O. will join with me." In another to the same, he says: "I have much pleasure in the Sabbath morning concert with you and Mr O. I should be glad to have it continued, and the design particularly attended to, namely, praying for the world at large, and the missionaries in it, and their labours, that the Bible may be spread and eminently blessed,—that a race of young ministers may be raised up and eminently blessed,—that all the present good designs may be furthered and eminently blessed,—and that the congregations and families to which we belong may be also blessed." But prayer was not with him so much a frequent exercise as a religious habit, mingling with, and giving a character to all that he did. "The longer I live," he once remarked, "the more I think every thing should be accompanied with prayer and supplication." Every thing of moment, accordingly, appears to have been carried by him to the throne of grace. His intercourse with his friends, his sympathizing attentions to the distressed, his religious and bene-

volent exertions, all were sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. "I hope," he says, in a letter to a friend, "that our intercession for each other will be as mutual as our correspondence." Writing to another on the loss of his father, he says: "It was my earnest desire to sympathise most tenderly with you under the loss of your much revered and worthy father, and I tried to express this in prayer to the God of all grace." He writes thus in another letter: "During the winter I wish to write out the Letters on Sanctification. As you are my very kind and affectionate friend, I hope you will remember me in these letters. Cry for the Spirit's direction and assistance to me, and engage some of your praying friends." And to another friend, he thus writes in a similar strain: "We have a committee here on Tuesday, to devise a scheme to spread the Gospel more fully among the Highlanders. Look up to God to direct us. Let Mr G. our friend, and also Mrs C. mind us."

In short, it may be observed, that Mr Brown's religion was a religion of principle. It sprung natively and necessarily from his views of Divine truth. It was not of the nature of a garment, which is put on the body, but does not form a part of it; it was rather like the branches and foliage of a tree, which grow out of the root and adhere to it. In religion, some persons act from the mere impulse of feeling, others from mere custom and habit. These persons are either altogether destitute of religious knowledge, or their knowledge has no

influence upon their practice. Mr Brown felt and acted in matters of religion under the influence of the truths he believed. These were not with him mere subjects of speculation. They were the things by which he lived, and in which was the life of his soul,—at once the sources of his comfort and the means of his sanctification. “The subject,” he says, in his introductory letter on Sanctification, “is peculiarly engaging, nor is it wonderful that I am partial to it. It is the foundation of all my present comfort, and all my hopes for eternity; and earnestly desiring as I do the happiness of my friend, I know no better method of promoting it, than by endeavouring to build him up in the most holy faith.”

Upon this foundation of original qualities of mind, which were decidedly useful if not showy, coupled with and modified, as these were, by a religious cast in the very mould of the New Testament, there was erected a comely superstructure of personal, friendly, and domestic habits. In adverting to his personal habits, the first place, perhaps, is due to the strict economy which he used in the disposal of his time. It was by means of this, in a great measure, that he was enabled to do so much. Although he was one who very much enjoyed society, and whose intercourse with society, as might be supposed from the number of his connexions, was very extensive, he was exceedingly sparing in the time that he gave to it. His calls and visits, which were seldom matters of form

and ceremony, but had usually something useful for their object, were very much like his letters, numerous but short. When he had said or done what he intended, he took his leave. Even in his own house, after shewing to his visitors the attention which courtesy required, and kindness dictated, he left them not unfrequently in the company of his family, and retired to his study. There were with him no blank portions of time; all was filled up and occupied.

Closely connected with the economical disposal and improvement of his time, were his habits of order. He could not bear to see any thing put out of its proper place, or done out of its proper time. He proceeded always according to plan and method with his work. Having made his arrangements, and allotted to every day and hour their respective tasks, he adhered to them. Hence it was that, though always doing something, he never appeared in a hurry or bustle. I have often observed that he was always rather before than after the hour of an engagement.

In his management of secular affairs he was peculiarly unskilful. He not only did not understand them, but manifested a simplicity which, had his situation exposed him, would have made him the dupe of any designing unprincipled individual. The things of the world occupied as little room as possible in his heart, and engaged no portion of his attention but what they forced. When at any time called to attend to them, it was evident to all

that he was out of his proper sphere and element. He seemed not to have the capacity, and certainly not the inclination, for managing worldly business of any kind. It was well that his situation in life, and the prudence of those about him, exempted him, to a very great extent, from the necessity of this, and allowed him to devote all his attention and energies to what both his duty and his disposition led him to. More than once, however, his extreme simplicity in reference to secular matters, exposed him to pecuniary loss, and placed him in embarrassing difficulties. But his history furnishes a proof and illustration of the truth which, as has been already remarked, he quoted in reference to another, "that the Lord preserveth the simple."

Mr Brown also was a man of decidedly peaceful and prudent habits. The principle on which he appeared to act was never, if possible, to take offence, and, where he could do it consistently with the performance of duty, never to give offence. He was very much what the Apostle exhorted the Philippians to be, "blameless, and harmless without rebuke, doing all things as much as lay in him without murmurings and disputings." That he in no instance carried the desire for peace, and the wish to avoid giving offence, to an undue length,—that he *never* yielded when he ought to have remained firm, and *never* took a circuitous path when he ought to have taken a direct straightforward one,—it would be too much to assert. I

have thought, indeed, that his desire of pleasing every body was the principal defect of his character, and led occasionally to something like inconsistency and vacillation of conduct. But, notwithstanding, it may be affirmed with the utmost truth, that, in general, his peaceableness was the peaceableness of principle as well as of natural temper, and his prudence the practical expression of "the wisdom that is from above." There was, in fact, as one who intimately knew him expresses it, "a natural sensitiveness about his mind, which might sometimes have expressed itself in the shape of resentment, but for the dominant power of christian charity and humility. The advice which he sometimes gave to others, not rashly to reply to provoking language, but either to be silent, or give that 'soft answer that turneth away wrath,' was evidently but the utterance of the strong principle which ruled in his own conduct."

Mr Brown was distinguished also in his station for liberality in the cause of religion and general benevolence. His means indeed, as may be easily supposed, were not very ample ; but, possessing a liberal soul, he devised liberal things. "To his power," I may say, in the words of the Apostle, "I bear record, yea and beyond his power, he was willing to communicate, ready to distribute, addicting himself to the ministry of the saints, and given to hospitality." There were few who had less desire to make money than he had, and few who were readier to part with what was gotten for

useful purposes. Though his income was at no time more than adequate to the support of a family in his rank of life, he always had something to bestow in the cause of the poor and the cause of the gospel ; and when, some years before he died, he thought that, owing to the pressure of the times, the congregation might feel the amount of his stipend burdensome, he freely, and without solicitation, remitted £10 annually of what was due, and this he did to the end of his life.

He was characterized also by great spirituality of mind. Scarcely an event could occur, or any striking object present itself to his view, which did not act as a conductor of his thoughts and feelings to something serious ; and in this there was nothing affected or artificial,—it was the natural working of his mind. Thus, when on his tour in the Highlands, he often, when contemplating the rugged hills and lofty mountains of that alpine region, towering one above another in awful grandeur, observed that “ the mountain of the Lord’s house would yet be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills.” When, too, in the course of the same journey, he passed along by Loch Lubnaig, he would frequently stand still, and admire the wonderful works of God, repeating, as he looked up to the magnificent masses of mountain and hill overhead, and then to the dark waters of the lake beneath, “ Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, thy judgments are a great deep.” Thus also, upon another occa-

sion, when passing by a person whom he knew on the road-side breaking stones, he said to him, after exchanging salutations, "Now mind the hard and stony heart."

Intimately connected with this last feature in his character, and indeed arising out of it, was the happy art he possessed of leading the mind of others to a spiritual improvement of passing events. His invariable method was to make use of the common objects and occurrences of life, as steps by which he might naturally lead his hearers or correspondents up to religion and to God. Writing to a person connected with the sea, he says: "You will no doubt often see God's wonders in the deep. O that, while we are sailing down the current of time, we may all land on the happy shores of Immanuel's land." When, upon one occasion, the elder of a neighbouring newly erected congregation was lamenting to him the death of two of his brother elders, Mr Brown replied, "God has given and accepted the first ripe fruits, and this is a sign that he will give the future harvest." Upon another occasion, when conversing about several godly persons who had died some time previously, Mr Brown remarked, "that it was an omen of a storm coming when these birds of paradise were flocking home."

These habits of giving to every thing a spiritual turn and direction—of making nature and religion, the Bible and Providence, bear upon and illustrate one another—imparted, as was natural, a peculiar

tone and character to his *conversation*. His conversational powers were naturally considerable, and he shewed frequently no small address in exercising them in such a manner as to engage all who were present in the conversation. Possessing a large portion of what is termed natural politeness, though none of that affectation which sometimes passes for it, he usually contrived to make the conversation turn into that channel with which the company were most familiar. But whatever the channel was, the conversation was always on his part strongly impregnated with what was profitable to the use of edifying, and tended to minister grace to the hearers. "The waters of the sanctuary" were always introduced by him, and made to run through every opening which the conversation allowed. It seldom or never happened that he entered into any company, without producing an impression upon it favourable to religion, and without, when he left it, leaving a savour and relish of piety behind him; and this he did without in any respect rendering the conversation dull and stiff and formal. On the contrary, he shewed much liveliness, and even occasionally playfulness. An uninterrupted cheerfulness of manner, an inexhaustible fund of religious anecdote, and a rich variety of pointed remark, rendered his conversation not only profitable to the serious, but agreeable to persons of all descriptions. The best proof of this is, that even his common con-

versation possessed great attractions for the young, with whom he was always a peculiar favourite.

There was, it may be further remarked, in his general deportment, a happy union of familiarity and dignity. He was easily accessible to the youngest and the poorest; none were afraid to speak to him, but seldom did any presume to take undue liberties with him. While there was a softness and sweetness in his manner which invited confidence and affection, there was an indescribable something which commanded reverence, and prevented or repressed every approach to improper freedoms. The people of Whitburn were accustomed to observe, that whenever Mr Brown made his appearance in the town on the Sabbath evening (which was often the case, as he was in the frequent habit of visiting a Sabbath school there), both old and young, who happened at the time to be in the street, immediately, from an instinctive feeling of veneration for his character, retired into their houses. When, going up to London by sea in 1814, some fellow passengers of the baser sort, knowing or guessing his profession, were resolved to play off their profane wit upon him; with this design they wrote him a note, saying, that, as they presumed he was one that was acquainted with, and could apply the "balm of Gilead," they were anxious he would prescribe for a young woman who was under great distress of mind. Having read the note, and perceiving at once the spirit of it, he went down to the cabin from which it had been

brought to him, and holding it open in his hand said, "Gentlemen, it is of little importance what insults you offer me personally, but I cannot and will not bear to see Him whose I am, and whom I serve, insulted. Mock not lest your bands be made strong." The effect of his appearance and address were such, that during the rest of the passage he was treated with the utmost respect. He observed afterwards, that he never felt before so distinctly the force of the Psalmist's prayer, "Gather not my soul with sinners." In his conduct Mr Brown also beautifully exemplified the apostolical precept, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." Those who were much his inferiors in preaching he honoured as almost his masters in the sacred art. I notice among his papers a number of skeletons of sermons, which, after having heard, he had solicited from the preachers of them, for his private edification, although, in some of the instances at least, he was capable of producing much better himself. Under the influence of the same disposition, he was at all times desirous, when any thing appeared to him necessary to be written, either in a separate form, or the religious magazines of the day, to command, if possible, the pens of his brethren, rather than employ his own. There were few who, in his estimation, did not preach better and write better than himself. Indeed, this amiable disposition was, in some instances, carried the length of even a culpable want of self-confidence. In con-

sequence of this, he was sometimes induced to surrender his own better judgment to that of others,—an infirmity which was the more to be regretted, as his own judgment was naturally a good and a sound one.

Mr Brown was one who was always “content with such things as he had.” He sought not great things either for himself or his family. When his eldest son, the present Dr John Brown of Edinburgh, was called to the two congregations of Stirling and Biggar, while he used no undue influence to bias his choice, he gave his decided preference to, and spoke in the Synod in favour of, the small congregation and the small stipend. Writing to one of his sons-in-law respecting a situation which he had obtained, he says, “I think it the best place you have ever been in, and I would have you seek no other, but wait on God in his providence, who has in the present instance done wondrously for you, and fill up your present situation to the best advantage. Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily be fed.” Where others would have been “troubled and careful about many things,” “his mind was stayed, trusting in the Lord.” When a near relative complained of the unmindfulness of a brother, he said, “Remember there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” When, upon another occasion, Mrs Brown said, What would become of her and her children if he was taken away, he simply replied, “My God shall supply all your need.”

Another peculiarity in the character of Mr Brown was, the marked anxiety he ever displayed to perpetuate the memory of good men. He thought that the righteous ought to be held in everlasting remembrance. He often repeated the promise, "Them that honour me I will honour;" and he reckoned it his privilege to contribute to the fulfilment of this promise. Accordingly, besides what he actually did in the way of rescuing from oblivion the works, and bringing into notice the characters, of eminent men, both in separate publications and in magazines, he projected, as has been already stated, a Seceders' Memorial, and also another biographical work, to be called "The Modern Triumphs of Faith," as well as some other memoirs. He might probably in part be led into this track by his antiquarian predilections, which were considerable; but there is no doubt that, first and principally, he was influenced by his love of the truth, and his desire to honour whomsoever God delighteth to honour; and it was permitted to him to be instrumental above most in bringing into publicity and honour those who are, and who shall yet more openly and universally be, acknowledged to be the "excellent of the earth."

Mr Brown was always very much affected with the sins, and even indiscretions, of professors. He felt on these occasions as if he himself had been injured. Any irregularities, especially in the members of his own congregation, hardly ever failed to produce a visible impression upon his

health and spirits. The first attack of his last illness was occasioned by his hearing of the imprudence of a young minister of his acquaintance.

It may deserve also to be mentioned, as another of Mr Brown's characteristic habits, that he cherished and manifested a most sacred reverence for the Sabbath. He made conscience above most that I have been acquainted with of keeping the Sabbath day "holy to the Lord." He was observed, naturally and unobtrusively, to lead the conversation to subjects which, while they interested, were in keeping with the hallowed character of the day. Every tendency to what was light, frivolous, or carnal, he delicately checked, by directing the conversation into another channel; and when he could not succeed in doing this, he, according as the circumstances seemed to dictate, either boldly reproved the offence, or held his peace. It may be said with truth, that he spent the whole day literally either in the public or private exercises of God's worship; and yet so far, on the Sabbath day, was his house from being overshadowed with gloom, that it looked and felt like "a little heaven below."

The last thing which the writer deems it necessary to notice here, is what may be called Mr Brown's habit of scripture meditation. It was his practice, when travelling—in his leisure moments,—and even during the watches of the night, to hold communion with heaven, through the medium of some passages of the word of God. On these

occasions God's word was found of him, and he did eat it, and it was the joy and rejoicing of his heart. "When, like Isaac," says one of his family, "he went forth to meditate at eventide, or when, on Sabbath morning, he took his accustomed turn before the house, we remember to have heard him repeating texts, or portions of texts, of Scripture, evidently so engrossed with his sacred contemplation, as to be unconscious of their escaping his lips. We have often too overheard him so engaged, when seated in his easy chair, after the labours of the day." He had frequently, in the morning, to tell his partner in life, how "his reins had instructed him in the night season," and that the consolations of God had delighted his soul. And though constitutionally reserved, especially in reference to his own religious experience, he was accustomed sometimes to mention to his friends, that once when returning home from college, immediately before his mother died, and again when travelling in the neighbourhood of Stirling, on the morning of the day on which his intimate friend, the Reverend Mr Gilfillan of Dunblane died, he enjoyed a holy and inexpressible transport of soul in meditating upon the words "He hath done all things well."

It will be proper now to glance, for a very little, at the character of Mr Brown as a friend and a member of general society. He was naturally susceptible of friendship, and the pleasures of social intercourse. He enjoyed few things more than

the company, and the converse of the intelligent and the pious. The peculiar ease with which he formed acquaintanceships, and even friendships, was a very visible and marked feature in his character, and was the more observable, as it was in striking contrast with his natural timidity and diffidence. Wherever he met with a person in whom he perceived "any thing good towards the Lord God of Israel," or whom he thought he could benefit or render useful, he never failed, if possible, to introduce himself to that person, and it seldom happened that he did not gain his confidence. While there was the reverse of any thing like obtrusive forwardness about him (no man had less of this than he had), there was a native frankness and simplicity of manner, which attracted and opened the heart to him. He could not even travel in a stage-coach without unconsciously almost insinuating himself into the notice, and gaining the respect and good will, of those who travelled along with him.

The persons with whom he contracted his most intimate friendships were invariably persons of a decidedly pious character, and, in many instances, they were *young* persons. He asked not, and cared not, to what religious party or denomination they belonged. He had intimate friends among all parties. But he neither understood nor practised the policy of those, who, though they profess to be travelling to "Zion with their faces thitherward," select even their bosom friends from the

men of this world. He even shewed impatience in the company of such, and could not bear that any of his family should cultivate their society, however high they might be in a worldly point of view. There were few places which he was in the habit of even occasionally visiting, where he had not a select circle of acquaintances and friends, whom he called upon, and corresponded with; but they were always persons of the choicest religious character. He sought out, wherever he went, and courted the society, not of the most opulent and distinguished, but the most humble and experimental Christians. These were, in his estimation, "the excellent of the earth, and in them was his delight."

His friendship was sweetened by a large infusion of fatherly affection, and sanctified by fervent piety. One, who enjoyed no small measure of his friendly regard, says, in a letter to the writer, "His friendship was of such a kind as to be a real treasure to those who were favoured with it. It was marked, and that strongly, by all the naïveté of a little child, and yet it had the dignity and purity becoming a venerable saint, and servant of the Most High. He seldom dismissed a particular friend, especially a young person, without having retired with him for the purpose of prayer. One instance of his kind and fatherly manner very much affected me at the time. I had consulted him some time before in reference to a personal concern of importance. Taking me aside one

evening, he addressed me in the following manner : ‘ Now, I am much obliged to you for telling me about *yon* ; and I wish you *aye* to tell me about any thing that troubles you, or any uneasiness you have. And you’ll not forget me at home. Good night. Farewell, my dear boy.’ It astonished me not a little to hear *him* expressing gratitude for any confidence *I* had put in him. I was at the time only seventeen years of age.”

To his brethren in the ministry he always “ shewed himself friendly.” He never used slighting or disparaging language in reference to them ; but, on the contrary, esteemed them, and spoke of very highly in love, for their work’s sake. By his advice, by his letters, and by his personal labours, he was always forward to do good to them as he had opportunity. In a letter to him, a venerable predecessor of the writer’s, now many years deceased, says, “ Your letters have been very agreeable to me, and the Lord Jesus lead your mind into the same train of thinking concerning his dispensations towards you.” The native friendliness of his disposition shewed itself conspicuously in the very affectionate manner in which he conducted himself towards his colleague. It is not always that ministers manifest or feel a cordial friendship for those who, as colleagues and successors, divide with them the affection and respect of their people, and whom they see “ increasing,” while they must “ decrease.” But Mr Brown felt towards his colleague no such jealousy. He uni-

formly treated him as a son, and his affection was justified and returned. "When I came here," says Mr Millar, "he received me with open arms, and an open heart. And in all his subsequent conduct he manifested the strongest desire to promote, not only my personal comfort, but also my usefulness among the people of our mutual charge. In every perplexity, he showed the utmost readiness to direct me by his counsels; and in every difficulty it was his delight to soothe my mind, by suggesting those consolations wherewith he himself had formerly been comforted. Indeed, he could not have acted towards me with greater kindness although I had been his own son. And, from the first to the very last moment of our connexion with each other, I am confident that a single jarring feeling never existed between us. It could not, indeed, have been otherwise without great blame on my part, for, possessing so many amiable and lovely qualities as he did, who would not have rejoiced in his sight? Always cheerful himself, he generally communicated the same pleasing feeling to others; while his piety was exhibited invariably in such a winning form, that few who witnessed it could help wishing to go and do likewise."

In the exercise of his friendship Mr Brown did not "love in word only, but in deed and in truth." His desires and active endeavours to serve his friends, and neighbours, and acquaintances in general, were always equal to, and sometimes above

and beyond his ability. Indeed, in his attempts to do this, the kindness and easiness of his nature not unfrequently involved him in difficulties. He felt such a strong reluctance to say to any of his friends who asked him a favour *nay*, that he sometimes engaged to do, what he afterwards found it necessary to decline doing. Had he had even less of the desire of serving and accommodating his friends, he would have saved himself frequently much uneasiness.

It has been mentioned as a peculiarity in his character, that some of his most intimate friends, and the persons with whom he most regularly and frequently corresponded, were young persons. There was, indeed, about his feelings, to the very last, a kind of juvenility, which led him not only to tolerate, but to sympathize with, and find a pleasure in, the liveliness and buoyancy of youth. But though this was the case, it did not lead him to cast off, or be indifferent to, his old friends. The friends of his youth he never forgot, even to old age. I observe in several of his letters the warm affection with which he speaks of the Reverend Mr Sheriff of Tranent, who, from the years of boyhood, had been his chief companion and friend. After Mr Sheriff's death he thus writes: "I have to tell you of the death of Mr Sheriff of Tranent, the friend of my youth, since we were fourteen. I have heard him, when he knew nothing of it, wrestling with God in his father's loft. He was only a few days ill before he thought himself dying, but

quite calm—no way afraid, but joyful in the view of glory. The thought of the companions of my youth getting home in this way affects me. Grace can carry you and me through also. And if we die trusting, it is as safe to us, and as honourable to God, as to die triumphing, as this saint did.” With respect to him, he remarks in another letter : “ His religion made him dear to me in the day of my youth, and our attachment kept to the end.” The late Reverend Dr Hall of Edinburgh was another of his early friends, with whom he maintained an unbroken and fervent friendship to the end. The following extract from a letter of the Doctor’s to him is equally creditable to the hearts of both : “ Old friends we are, and old friends should take a *death’s grip* of one another ; and if we are in Christ, the hold which he has taken of us will render the hold we have of each other indissoluble. It doth not therefore now appear what we shall be hereafter in ourselves, and to one another ; but this we know, that when He who is our life and the centre of our union shall appear, we shall appear with Him and with one another in glory, and shall be for ever like, and for ever with him. Thine own friend, and thy father’s, and thy Saviour’s friend, forsake not.”

In domestic life, as well as in society, Mr Brown appeared in a very favourable point of view. It does not always happen that a person distinguished in a public capacity, or in his study, shines equally in the more retired and quiet walks

of the family circle. The tempers and dispositions which fit for the one, are not in every case those which qualify for the duties of the other. Mr Brown, however, was as exemplary in his domestic relations as in the church and in the world. When young, and in his father's house, he uniformly proved himself a most dutiful son and affectionate brother, and his filial and fraternal piety continued a prominent element in his character to the end. The members of his father's second family testify to the uniform kindness and affection he displayed towards them and their excellent mother, as long as she lived. And the same qualities and dispositions of mind which rendered him in his father's family a good son and brother, rendered him, when he came to have a family of his own, a good husband and a good father. All that lived under his roof loved and revered him;—loved him for his warm and unaffected kindness,—revered him for his consistent and fervent piety.

One of the younger members of his family thus speaks of him in this relation. “ I cannot speak of our dear Father in the vigour of life. I remember him only as the *old man*. But old age in his case was far from being ‘ dark and unlovely.’ His uncommon equability of temper and habitual cheerfulness, united with the happy light in which he was disposed to view every thing, and the simplicity and blandness of his manners diffused happiness and peace around him. He was, at least in *our* partial eyes, one of those beautiful examples of

age, so aptly described as ‘not more venerable for its past virtues, than amiable with a lasting and still increasing gentleness, which softens the veneration indeed, but augments even while it softens it.’ No one could be long under his roof without perceiving that he habitually ‘walked with God.’ It has been justly remarked of him, that he wore his Master’s uniform upon all occasions. On returning into the bosom of his family, after the discharge of his public duties, instead of laying it aside, it seemed the garment wherewith he was always girded. When, in the course of his reading, he met with any passage that peculiarly pleased him, he was in the habit, either when he came down to meals, or in the evening, of reading it over again to us, playfully introducing it by saying, ‘Now, my dear,’ or ‘Now, *bairns*, I am going to read a most ‘*bonnie note*,’ (alluding to an old friend who was in the habit of using that expression) and following the reading by some commendatory or illustrative remark of his own. It was on such occasions too, that, in easy and unreserved conversation, making companions of his children, he would talk with much affection of the friends of his youth, remark the changes that had taken place in the opinion and habits of christians; and while he loved to dwell on the heart-exercised and deep-toned personal piety of those with whom he associated in his early days, he fully appreciated the comparatively greater activity in the spread of christianity and knowledge which distinguished

the present times. At these evening seasons also, we remember how he would listen to the recital of the little incidents which had taken place among us during the day, with an interest which shewed that, although he had passed the limits usually allotted to human life, he had not outlived the feelings and sympathies that enhance every enjoyment, and bind so closely the endearing relationships of life. We cannot fail to dwell with delight on the kind interest he took in all our little affairs, when we recollect to how good an account he was wont to turn them. On my mother's expressing one evening, as he thought, an undue degree of anxiety with respect to our temporal concerns, he, in a chiding, yet tender tone, said, "My dear, do we not profess to say *Thy will be done*?" He had always some word of comfort, commonly from Scripture, ready to cheer and encourage when any difficulty was apprehended. When discussing, in the family circle, the possibility of the removal of a near relative to a distant part of the country, an event in which he evinced an unusually anxious interest, he said, with a look of placid satisfaction, "However it may turn out, we know *who* hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'" On one new year's-day morning, when we were wishing one another a good new year, he remarked, respecting the foolish and vain anxiety to know the future, that the best way was to commit our way to the Lord, trust in him, and be doing good.

"In his treatment of his children, there was a

union of gentleness and dignity ; for, while they knew not what it was to be frightened for their father, they never dared to use any undue freedoms with him. One of his daughters retains a vivid recollection of a little incident which shews that, while he could exert the authority of a parent, it was authority directed by justice, and tempered by love. After correcting her, he discovered that she had not been in fault. No sooner was he aware of this, than he came down and apologized to the child for not having made himself better acquainted with the circumstances ;—an acknowledgment which, from the way in which it was made, was so far from impairing the feeling of veneration due to a parent, that it rather heightened it. His natural kindliness of disposition led him to shew a peculiar fondness for *little ones*, as he was in the habit of calling young children. Of this we had a most touching proof during his last illness. Although incapable of speaking, and also suffering under the effects of his disease, an infant grandchild, who happened to be with its mother in the house, could never be brought into his presence without his attention being excited, and his countenance assuming a visible unwonted animation. It was affecting to see the old, palsied, dying man, fondling and kissing the infant, and looking, though hardly able to utter expressions of endearment. His affection for the members of his own family was not expressed in endearing epithets, nor, since childhood, by fond caresses. It was

when any of us were in sickness, or when some particular circumstance called it forth, that we could best estimate the depth and tenderness of his affection. On such occasions he shewed himself pre-eminently "a son of consolation," never failing to speak to us in the most kind and sympathizing manner, and to make particular mention of us, and our circumstances, in his family prayers. He was fond of having his children about him, but it was not that foolish fondness which would gratify itself at the expense of both duty and interest. In a letter to one of us at a distance he says, "It is pleasant to me to have you and the rest about me, but it is best for us all to be in the way of our duty." "The Lord," he says in another, "is the best manager of our lot, and can choose best for us."

"The young people educated under his roof, he regarded, to use an expression of his own, as his *providential children*. He manifested much interest in their religious instruction, and a kind concern for their comfort and happiness. Their impressible young minds could not witness his daily walk and conversation, without being convinced that religion is not that gloomy thing which many people represent it. In this respect, as in others, he was himself a living example of what he recommended, for he frequently warned persons to beware of bringing reproach upon religion by an austerity of temper or gloominess of manner. His habitual kindness to the young people, secured

attention on their part to his good advices; and we have repeatedly had pleasing evidences, that his weighty and pointed, almost individual, addresses in private on Sabbath evening, when he took advantage of every passing incident to gain their attention and impress their heart, were not lost upon them. He frequently said to us, ‘Mind try to do them all the good you can. O try to impress them with what’s good.’ He insisted much on the importance of storing the memory in youth with sacred truth, for though for a time it should make no impression, it may in after life, by the blessing of God, spring up and bring forth fruit to everlasting life. The last week but one of his life, he had the young ladies who were with us at the time in the house brought into his room, when, among other serious counsels, he affectionately entreated them to obey their parents, read their Bibles, and love their God.”

LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.

It has been often and well remarked, that the manner in which a person lives is of vastly more importance than the manner in which he dies. It is by the former that the character is marked and determined; the latter only imparts to it some temporary and unessential shadings, resembling the accidental glow or gloom which invests the summer sun at its setting. It is very natural,

however, and perfectly lawful, to wish to know the circumstances in which a person left the world, as well as those in which he went through it. In the foregoing pages, it has been attempted to exhibit a just portraiture of Mr Brown's life, in public and in private, in the church and in the family ; it will now be the object of the writer to give a brief account of the few circumstances connected with his departure from the world.

During the two or three last years of Mr Brown's life, his strength was visibly failing. It was not difficult to perceive, even amid the general good health and the agreeable flow of spirits he enjoyed, that the springs of life were gradually relaxing, and his originally sound constitution giving way. But there was no relaxation or falling off in his anxiety to do good. The infirmities of age, though they rendered him incapable of his former exertions, in no respect chilled the ardour of his zeal,—if possible, the flame of his piety and devotion seemed to burn more fervently. Writing at this period to an affectionate friend, who had urged him to spare himself a little, he says, “ I shall lessen my labours, and do less in the way of *active* exertion as I advance in age. I see it is needful. But we can never do sufficiently for Him who died ten thousand deaths in one for us.” Writing also somewhat about the same time to an aged Christian like himself, he thus expresses himself : “ Many of our dear and valuable acquaintances have left us, and are gone home to their Father's

house. O that we could follow them in their faith and holiness. I think in our old age to pray much for our Redeemer's interest, one of the best things we can do for ourselves, or our relatives and fellow-men." It was observed too by his family, that latterly he appeared more engaged than even usual with the sacred volume, making it in a manner literally "his study all the day." Thus, it may be said, that the evening of his life was very much of the same character and colour as the noon-day of it. There was no intermission of his zeal, and no declension in his piety.

Through life Mr Brown was naturally apprehensive of death. He had frequently a nervous fear of dying, which, though it did not make "him subject to bondage," occasioned him at times a portion of disquietude. Though few perhaps had less reason to fear, and more reason to triumph, there were few who spoke with greater diffidence or self-abasement than he did in the view of death. In a letter to a very dear friend, he thus expresses himself: "O, W——, pray for me. As I advance in years I find a failure of natural spirits, and though, after some trials, I think I habitually love Christ's interests, and Christ's people, yet my experience is so small under many advantages, that I have no few fears with respect to death and eternity. Therefore, as a friend, give God no rest about this, that he may give me sound conversion, and the evidence of it, in a lively appropriating faith." From hints which he occasionally dropt

in conversation, it was evident that the subject of death occupied a very considerable share of his attention. I recollect now, the frequency with which he used, towards the end of his life, to refer to, and speak of, Boston's Sermon on "Rational Evidences for Heaven illustrated." He was observed, too, to be frequently reading a little book, called "Remedies against the Fears of Death." I notice in his copy of Traill on the Throne of Grace, which he had been reading over again not long before his death, a number of passages marked, all having a reference to death as a time of need, and to the grace which may be obtained in it. One of the passages particularly marked seems to have been completely the expression of his own feelings. "To shut the eyes," says Mr Traill, "and give the hand to Christ, and, to quiet the mind, by trusting our guide in this last step, is a mighty blessing." In connexion with this, it may be mentioned, that, up to the period of his last illness, he often shewed a marked love of life. "I would like," he would frequently say, "if it was the will of Providence, to be spared to do a little more in my Master's work." Even during the severe illness he laboured under in the year 1829, he would never anticipate death. Contrary to the opinion of all his friends, and even his medical attendants, he always cherished the confident expectation of being restored to health, and to his beloved work of preaching. Under that illness, too, he appeared in an uncomfortable, and even irritable state of

mind, arising, it was evident, from the peculiar nature of the disease under which he laboured. But, during the short period of his last illness, almost every thing was reversed. From the very first (a fortnight before the paralytic attack) he appeared to look forward to death. He expressed no expectation, he even shewed no desire of living, and there was, moreover, something so resigned and softened in his manner, as forcibly reminded those about him of "a weaned child." It was evident that now the fruit was fully ripe, and ready to drop as soon as the tree was shaken.

At the commencement of his illness, and for the space of a day or two, he was distressingly harassed by doubts and alarms. He even once expressed his fear to Mrs Brown, that it was all a delusion. But happily "this horror of great darkness" that fell upon him, was of short continuance. The day quickly broke, and the shadows fled away. He was overheard, when he appeared to be asleep, saying to himself, "I'll flee to the blood of Jesus, the precious blood of Jesus. I have always done so, and all the devils in hell shall not prevent me from doing it now." He was also heard saying, "He is *my* God—He is *my* Creator—He is *my* Redeemer." The same evening he told an anecdote, which was clearly indicative of the exercise of his own mind at the time, of an elder of a neighbouring congregation, who being sadly harassed by Satan's temptations, and having only one promise that he could take hold of, exclaimed to

this effect, "Vile devil! *one* promise has been sufficient to cause thee torment for nearly six thousand years, and shall not I trust to *one* promise for safety and comfort!" After this short and desperate struggle, Mr Brown shewed the greatest composure of mind, nor was Satan permitted to disturb his peace more. His natural dread of dying even seemed to be taken away, so that, like his Divine Redeemer, he was heard in the very thing which he feared. The truth which he had preached so long to his people proved now the support and solace of his own soul. His colleague, at one time, after remarking to him, that he had, during his life, strenuously contended for the doctrines of grace, asked, if he found them sufficient to support his mind in his present trying circumstances? His answer was, "Quite sufficient, nothing but the doctrine of grace will do."

Mr Brown once remarked upon the passage, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," that the promise was fulfilled when we were made to glorify God, though we were not delivered. In this sense he had the fulfilment of the promise in his last illness. He called upon God in the day of his trouble, and he was made to glorify him. From the nature of his disease, which was palsy, and which nearly deprived him of speech, he was not able to edify those around him by his conversation, as he would no doubt otherwise have done, and as he seemed frequently to wish to do. He said, however, and

looked *enough* to shew that his mind was in perfect peace, staid upon God. From the time that he was first seized, nothing seemed to give him so much delight as repeating to him the promises of the Gospel. It was frequently observed, that, when at any time he became uneasy and restless, the administering one of these spiritual cordials would immediately produce a visibly soothing effect upon him. He repeatedly said, in answer to questions respecting the state of his mind, "All's right, all's well." On one of his daughters asking him if he had no doubts, he distinctly articulated, "None." To his son Dr Brown, he said very audibly and intelligibly, "There's rest in Christ."

On one of his daughters repeating to him the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," he looked up, and with a smile of ineffable sweetness, and with great emphasis, said, "O yes, a *very* present help in trouble." One of his elders, after praying with him, repeated some suitable portions of Scripture, and among others, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness;" he said, "perfectly satisfied." He several times manifested a strong desire to speak to his colleague Mr Millar, and repeatedly made the attempt; but his palsied tongue would not obey the impulse of his mind. On one of these occasions, however, drawing him near to him, and kissing him, he said, "Glad, glad." Mrs Brown said, "Are you glad that you have got a colleague who will feed your people with the finest

of the wheat?" He replied, "*O aye.*" Mrs Brown then said, "I am sure you will wish Mr Millar to bring as many to see you in glory as he can." At the mention of this, says Mr Millar, he turned his face towards me, and his whole soul, as it were, beaming through his eye, he said with an energy of which I did not think him capable, "*Aye, do that, lad.*" To ascertain the state of his mind in the immediate prospect of dying, his son Dr Brown read the following extract from "*Secret Thoughts of a Christian lately Departed*, by his friend Ambrose Serle, Esq.," a little book which was a great favourite of Mr Brown's: "Mine age and my disorder put me continually in mind that I have no long continuance here. How shall I face death, usually styled the king of terrors! How shall I appear in the presence of God! I have surely no foundation of hope, but in the atoning blood and perfect obedience of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. I have no help but in the Spirit of Truth, by whom I have access to this grace wherein I stand. I have no plea but this one, which the Lord will not reject, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" To this Mr Brown distinctly signified his assent, as expressing the sentiments of his heart.

During life it had been Mr Brown's chief delight to preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and this passion seemed to remain strong in death. When asleep he appeared to be often thus engaged. His usual peculiar chaunt was heard

quite distinctly ; but it was only once or twice that those who attended him could certainly recognise what he said. At one time he was heard very distinctly, in his common singing tone, to say, “ O the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble ;” and at another, with like distinctness, “ Thy God thy glory.” After an increased laborious breathing of about two hours, and just after his brother the Reverend Ebenezer Brown had been praying in his behalf for a safe and speedy dismissal, he fell asleep. He oftentimes, when alive, referred to a saying of Boston’s, that if he was not allowed to glorify God by his speech in dying, he might be allowed to do it by his countenance. This, which seemed to be the desire of his own soul, he obtained. During the last night of his life, his countenance assumed a more than ordinarily serene aspect, and even the comparatively juvenile appearance that it had when he was about forty years of age. Thus he was enabled to leave the earth in the manner in which his sainted father, in a letter to him, expressed his wish to leave it, “ like a wax candle going out, with a rank odour of Him whose garments smell of myrrh and aloes, and cassia.” “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.” He died on the 10th February 1832, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, and the fifty-fifth of his ministry. On the Sabbath after he died, and while he was lying a corpse in the manse, his venerable brother the Reverend Ebe-

nezer Brown preached highly suitable sermons to the bereaved people. On the Monday evening also, which was the evening of the Monthly Missionary Prayer Meeting, he delivered a most interesting and impressive discourse, from the words, "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth;" from which he took occasion, in an equally ingenious and impressive manner, to remind the mourning family and congregation, that, though the deceased parent and pastor was now beyond the reach of their personal attentions, they had it still in their power to add to his bliss even in heaven, because they had it in their power to bring sinners to repentance.

On the Thursday following, all that remained of Mr Brown was committed to the dust, in the church-yard of Whitburn, in the presence of a very large assemblage of his brethren, people, and neighbours of all denominations. Before proceeding to the place of interment, the body was taken into the church, where a funeral address, honourable to the memory of the dead, and especially calculated to be useful to the living, was delivered by his intimate friend and neighbour, and the oldest member of his presbytery, the Reverend William Fleming, West Calder. On the Sabbath succeeding, the funeral sermon was preached to a very crowded and deeply affected congregation, by the Reverend John Brown, D.D. Edinburgh, from John xi. 11, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep."

As a last testimony of their respect and affection, his Congregation have erected a plain Monument over his grave, on which the following inscription is engraved.

IN HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE,
HERE REST THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
THE REV. JOHN BROWN,
MINISTER OF THE UNITED ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION,
WHITBURN;
WHO, DURING A MINISTRY OF NEARLY FIFTY-FIVE YEARS,
FULLY PREACHED THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST,
FAITHFULLY PERFORMED THE DUTIES OF THE PASTORAL CARE,
AND, BY HIS HOLY USEFUL LIFE,
ILLUSTRATED AND RECOMMENDED THE DOCTRINES HE TAUGHT
AND THE DUTIES HE ENJOINED.

His cheerful piety and active benevolence endeared him to all who knew him while he lived, drew forth strong and general regrets at his death, and secured for him the blessing which rests on "the memory of the just."

His congregation, as a token of their affectionate veneration of his worth, and grateful remembrance of his labours, have placed this Monument over his grave.

He was born at Haddington, July 24. 1754,—ordained at Whitburn, May 22. 1777,—and died there February 1832, in the 78th year of his age, and in the 55th year of his ministry.

His first wife, MRS ISABELLA CRANSTON, an amiable Christian, who died June 8. 1795, in the 36th year of her age, lies buried by his side,—and their two infant children, Janet and Ebenezer, are also interred in this Church-yard.

LIST OF THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE REVEREND
JOHN BROWN, WHITBURN.

1. Select Remains of the Rev. John Brown, late Minister of the Gospel at Haddington, containing, I. Memoirs of his Life; II. Letters to his Friends; III. Religious Essays; IV. Advices to his Children; V. An account of some of his Dying Sayings; and VI. Dying Advices to his Congregation. 12mo. London, 1789, pp. xii.—360.—This interesting memorial of their venerable Parent was introduced to the public by a Preface, signed by his two Sons then in the ministry, John and Ebenezer. It has passed through six large editions, undergoing considerable enlargements, and is highly prized by the admirers of experimental religion.

2. The Evangelical Preacher, a select Collection of Doctrinal and Practical Sermons, chiefly by English Divines of the Eighteenth Century. In 3 volumes 12mo.—The two first volumes were published at Edinburgh in 1802, and the third in 1806. The Sermons are forty-seven in number, and are judicious evangelical discourses. Mr Brown's name appears at the close of the Preface as the Selector and Editor, and the work is recommended by the Rev. Drs Erskine and Peddie of Edinburgh, and the Editor's neighbour and friend the Rev. Archibald Bruce of Whitburn.

3. Memoirs of the Life and Character of the late Rev. James Hervey, A. M. Compiled by the Rev. John Brown, Whitburn. 12mo. Edin. 1806.—A second edition, with such large additions as more than to double the size of the book, appeared in 1809. And a third edition, also enlarged, was published in 8vo, in 1821: This is not only an excellent Memoir of Hervey's Life and Character, but a condensed abstract of all that is most peculiar and valuable in his writings.

4. A Collection of Religious Letters from Books and Manuscripts, suited to almost every situation in the Christian Life, selected by the Rev. John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. 12mo. Edin. 1813. —A second edition, enlarged, appeared in 1816.

5. A Collection of Letters from printed Books and Manuscripts, suited to Children and Youth. Selected by John

Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. 18mo. Glasgow, 1815:

6. Gospel Truth accurately stated and illustrated, by the Rev. Messrs James Hog, Thomas Boston, Ebenezer and Ralph Erskines, and others, occasioned by the republication of the Marrow of Modern Divinity. Collected by John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. Edin: 1817.—This contains a general account of the controversy concerning the Doctrine of Grace in the Church of Scotland, in the beginning of the eighteenth century—Sketches of the Lives of those Ministers who defended the Doctrine of Grace, viz. Rev: Ebenezer Erskine, Ralph Erskine, Gabriel Wilson, Henry Davidson, Thomas Boston, James Hog, John Williamson, John Kid, John Bonar, James Bathgate, Hunter and Wardlaw—The Act of the General Assembly anent the Marrow of Modern Divinity—Queries addressed by the Assembly to the defenders of the Marrow—Answers to these Queries—Extracts from the works of the Marrow men, &c. A new and greatly enlarged edition of this work was published at Glasgow in 1831.

7. A brief account of a Tour in the Highlands of Perthshire, July 1818, in a Letter to a Friend, by John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn; to which is added, a paper entitled, A Loud Cry from the Highlands: 12mo. Edin. 1818:

8. Means of Doing Good, proposed and exemplified in several Letters to a Friend, by John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. 12mo. Edin. 1820.—This is worthy of a place on the same shelf with Cotton Mather's Essays to do good.

9. Memoirs of Private Christians, selected by John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. 8vo. Glasgow.—This work has no date, but it is believed that it was published about 1821. It was intended as a kind of continuation of his Father's "Practical Piety exemplified." It contains eighteen Memoirs of Persons in private life, distinguished for their Christian attainments.

10. Christian Experience, or the Spiritual Exercise of Eminent Christians in different ages and places, stated in their own words. Collected by John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. 18mo. Edin. 1825.

11. Descriptive List of Religious Books in the English Language, suited for general use; by John Brown, Minister of the Gospel, Whitburn. Edin. 1827.

12. Evangelical Beauties of the late Rev. Hugh Binning, M. A. with an Account of his Life, by the Rev. John Brown, Whitburn. 32mo. Edin. 1828.

13. Evangelical Beauties of Archbishop Leighton. Collected by the Rev. John Brown of Whitburn. 18mo. Berwick, 1828.

14. Notes, Devotional and Explanatory, on the Translations and Paraphrases in verse of several passages of Scripture, collected and prepared by a Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in order to be sung in Churches.—These were published with an edition of the Psalms in metre, with his father's Notes, in Glasgow; and again in Edinburgh, 1831.

15. Memoir of the Rev. Thomas Bradbury, author of the Mystery of Godliness; by the Rev. John Brown, Whitburn. 18mo. Berwick, 1831.

16. Memorials of the Nonconformist Ministers of the Seventeenth Century. Collected by the Rev. John Brown, Whitburn; with an Introductory Essay by William M'Gavin, Esq. Glasgow, 1832. — It is a singular circumstance that this was the last literary work of both the excellent men whose names appear on its title-page. Mr Brown died just before it went to press, and Mr M'Gavin just as it was leaving it.

Through his instrumentality chiefly, the following works were given to the public: — Boston's *Primitiæ et Ultima*, or the Early Labours and Last Remains of the Rev. Thomas Boston, in 3 vols. 12mo, Edin.; and Two Volumes of Sermons by the same author, in 8vo, Glasgow. A Treatise on the Nature and Influence of Faith, by the Rev. Archibald Hall of London: Edin. Sermons on various important topics, by the Rev. David Wilson of London: Glasgow, 1818. A selection of valuable Religious Letters, partly original, and a collection of the Sermons of the Rev. James Hervey, 8vo, published at Glasgow 1816, has a Preface by him, and there is reason to believe he was himself "the minister long and fully acquainted with Mr Hervey's works," who made the selection.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE INTERMENT OF THE REV. JOHN BROWN,
WHITBURN, ON THE 16TH FEBRUARY 1832, BY THE REV.
WILLIAM FLEMING, A. M. WEST CALDER.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,—To attend the funeral of a friend is no uncommon circumstance in this land of the dying; but to attend the funeral of a minister of Christ, who has laboured in the service of his Master for upwards of fifty-four years, is, what it is highly probable, few, if any, of us ever did before, and what, it is equally probable, few, if any, of us will ever be called to do again.

As I am requested by the friends of our deceased father to address you on this solemn occasion, I shall endeavour to lead you to a suitable improvement of an event, in which all of you, and many others not present, feel deeply interested. And, methinks, there are few opportunities of communicating and receiving religious impressions more favourable than that which is afforded by the death of a faithful minister of Christ.

It is far from my intention to pronounce an eulogium on the character of our departed friend. But if, during the few minutes I address you, I shall make allusion to his character, I trust you will hold me excused: It would be strange indeed

if I, who lived in intimate habits of friendship and ministerial communion with him, for the long period of nearly thirty-five years, and, during all that time, sympathized in his joys and sorrows, and witnessed at last his deathbed scene ; it would be strange, I say, if I could address you on the present occasion, and yet be entirely silent about him. My object, however, shall not be to speak so much to his praise, as to induce you to be followers of him as he was of Christ.

Our dear friend is gone, and this event reminds us that we ought to be “ followers of them, who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises.” “ Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” I have no doubt but that all of us, and particularly the people of his charge, esteemed him, while alive, “ very highly in love for his work’s sake ;” and I have as little doubt but that we and they will affectionately cherish the remembrance of him, now that he is gone. All of us believed him to be a decided Christian ; and, if you will allow the expression, which I apply to him without fear of contradiction, he was *out and out* the Christian minister. We have reason to believe that the grace of God took early possession of his soul, and it afterwards animated him in his ministry, and adorned his conversation. I need not tell you, how that, in his ministrations, he dwelt on the peculiar truths of the Gospel as a

man whose soul lived by the faith of them. Many of you recollect how earnestly he insisted on the sinner's need of a Saviour,—on the sovereignty, riches and freedom of divine grace,—on the all-sufficiency of the Saviour,—and on the free warrant of the sinner to believe in him; how frequently he stated in your hearing, that even by Christ there was no salvation in a state of sin, but salvation from sin; and how he embraced every opportunity of warning against sins common to the age, and tendered the most urgent exhortations to prayer, and to the suitable improvement of the ordinances of grace, and of the dispensations of Providence. We cannot but remember how diligent he was in advancing religious knowledge, particularly among the young, whose welfare he endeavoured to promote in every respect; and, by so doing, he, during his lengthened ministry, formed the religious sentiments and taste of the surrounding population. This he was enabled to do in consequence of a habit, which he cultivated with care during the whole course of his ministry, namely, that of knowing well the state of his flock, with the individual and family history of which he was minutely acquainted. Others as well as we can bear witness to the active zeal which he maintained in reference to all public institutions, which had for their object the propagation of the Gospel, whether Tract, Missionary, or Bible Societies, with all their extended ramifications. It is well known that, in order to promote divine truth, he was a

frequent contributor to the religious periodicals of the day, and abridged and edited some excellent volumes. As evangelical truth and religious biography imparted to himself much delight, so he frequently brought before the public the sentiments and examples of pious divines of former times, to bear upon the sentiments and conduct of Christians in the present day. Concern for the advancement of true religion seemed in him a master principle, influencing all his ministrations and conduct. He was a *workman* in his Master's service, and, as some of yourselves used to express it, while others were thinking, he was doing ; indeed, he was always doing in the service of Christ. His ministerial labours, his correspondence, his conduct in his family, his intercourse with society, and the whole tenor of his conversation, exhibited him as the minister of Christ. He was a soldier of Jesus Christ, who, in his character and conduct, always wore the uniform of his Master, and was found at the post of duty. Let those of us who are in the ministry remember him, and do likewise. In order to stir ourselves up to duty, let us remember how holily, inoffensively, and usefully he lived among us. Let us " follow his faith, considering the end of his conversation."

Let the departure of our valued friend excite us to pray earnestly for the Church of Christ. When the servants of Christ, who have received grace to be faithful, and have risen to high respect and great usefulness, die, we may be apt to say, What

will become of the interests of religion? Perhaps, deeply impressed with this thought, the primitive church would feel alarm and distrust when John, the last apostle, was removed from them, and perhaps a sensation of a similar kind would be produced by the death of Luther and Calvin, and other distinguished instruments of the good of the church. I remember of a similar sentiment being felt and expressed in my own time, when the late Dr Lawson of Selkirk, a man eminent for originality of thought, extensive learning, Christian simplicity of character, and eminent usefulness, was removed from the church below; and I doubt not, but that many, particularly in this neighbourhood and congregation, may, on account of the death we deplore, entertain a similar sentiment of fear for the ark of God. Such a sentiment naturally arises in the mind when the more eminent servants of Christ die. The church loses the benefit of their labours, prayers, and example. But we ought to recollect, that the best of these men were only instruments in the hands of Christ. The glorious Head of the Church, who is ascended to bestow gifts on men, still lives, blessed be our Rock. The stability and advancement of the kingdom of Christ depends not on the instrumentality of any individual, but on the power and grace of Him who can raise up and qualify instruments for His purpose, and who lives for ever more. "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, and the flower there-

of falleth away ; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever, which word is by the Gospel preached unto you." Those who preach the word die, and those who hear it die, but the dispensation of it shall continue, and shall be more or less successful, "till we all come to the fulness of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus." Let this thought excite and encourage us to prayer, saying, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth." Let us plead that the Head of the Church may raise up faithful labourers into his vineyard, and that he may bestow a double portion of his Spirit on those who are or shall be raised up to serve him. "He shall have a seed to serve him in all generations."

We shall see the face of our deceased friend no more. Ought we not to be deeply impressed with the truth, that, like him, we also shall go hence, and give in our account to God? The most of you will remember, that our deceased friend, on the Monday after the dispensation of the Supper in his own congregation, used, among other admonitions, to remind them, that one day there would be a resurrection of the truths they had heard. Methinks, this admonition comes now with redoubled force. Yes, brethren, one day there will be, in the sense of responsibility, a resurrection of our valued friend's ministry. Many of you will say to-day, with sorrow of heart, We have interred our worthy minister. But, brethren, I beseech you to inquire what improvement you have made under his ministrations. Let none of us who are in the

ministry presume that our period of ministration will last as long as his. Ours may be but of short continuance. "Whatsoever, then, our hands find to do, let us do it with all our might, since there is neither knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device in the grave, whither we are hastening." Our valued friend has finished his course. Let it be our concern that "we finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus." We shall this day bury the mortal remains of our friend out of our sight. But, let us all remember, that the period will soon arrive when we also shall be laid in the cold and silent grave. —"It is appointed unto men once to die." The law is thus laid down, the statute is clear, the precedent is before us. Let each one of us say, in application to himself, and as in the presence of God, "I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living." As the father of our deceased friend, whose praise is in the churches, somewhere remarks, "However men may live, they will find nothing but genuine Christianity fit to die with." O, then, let us, in this day of God's long-suffering patience, be savingly acquainted with that Redeemer who has been so long preached to us; let us become subject to the power of His grace, that in heart and in life we may be preparing for that world into which the soul of our deceased friend has entered. Then shall our death-bed scene, like his, be serene, and then shall the day of our death

be to our souls the day-break of eternal brightness.

I conclude, by preaching the Gospel to you in words, in which you have often heard our valued friend preach ; methinks, I hear him repeat them still, but they are the words of an infinitely greater than he. “ God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ; him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord we have righteousness and strength.”

“ Now, brethren, may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory now and for ever, Amen.”

LETTERS ON SANCTIFICATION.

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LETTER I.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

IT is with real satisfaction, my dear Theron, that I sit down to pursue, by epistolary communication, those subjects which have formed the principal theme of so many delightful, and I trust not altogether useless, conversations. From the library window I perceive those fields over which we saw the sower scattering the precious seed, covered with a rich verdure, and giving the promise of an abundant harvest. May I not indulge the hope, that the still more precious seed of the word sown in your heart, by the great Husbandman, through my humble endeavours, is already springing up in holiness and consolation, and will one day ripen into perfection of purity and felicity? The subject before me is peculiarly engaging—nor is it wonderful that I am partial to it. It is the foundation of all my present comfort, and all my hopes for eternity; and earnestly desiring, as I do, the happiness of my friend, I know no better method of promoting it than by endeavouring to build him up on the “most holy faith.”

Aware of the danger of the divine cause suffering through the weakness of its advocate, I lift up my heart

to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Father of lights, that he may instruct me in the great mystery of Christ, in us, *the hope of glory*, and *the spring of holiness*; and enable me, out of the good treasure of the sacred word, to bring forth things new and old for your edification and direction in the ways of God. I see peculiar need of divine illumination on this subject; for in the doctrine and duty of Gospel sanctification are great mysteries, and no where do multitudes of preachers more miserably err and mislead than here. Of this I am certain, that it is my earnest wish that my friend and myself may on this subject accurately and experimentally know the truth as it is in Jesus. "As my aim" (to borrow the words of a profound theologian and experienced saint of the last age *) "is to know Christ and him crucified, to exalt him, and to ascribe to him the pre-eminence in all things, to discover the whole of our salvation and glory of God thereby centred in his person and mediation, with its emanation from thence through the efficacy of the Eternal Spirit, and all our obedience to receive life, power, and vigour from thence only, knowing that it is the obedience of faith, and hath its foundation in blood and water; so I equally abhor all doctrines that would by any means intercept the efficacy of the death and cross of Christ from its work of perpetual and constant mortification in the heart of believers, or cut off any obligation unto obedience or holiness, that, by the discovery of the will of God, either in the law or the Gospel, is put upon the redeemed ones of the Lord."

I have, in the course of our conversations, discovered a zeal for the peculiarities of Gospel doctrine, which at one time you perhaps thought excessive: they have indeed long been high in my esteem, and dear to my heart:—yet were a writer or preacher to give an illustration, however luminous, and a proof, however satisfactory, of my favourite principle,—*that the sinner is justified on the ground of the*

imputed righteousness of the Redeemer, freely offered in the Gospel, and received by faith—which in the slightest degree trenching on the interests of holiness, I would consider him as acting a part most inconceivably criminal. The deadliness of the poison would correspond to the healing virtues of the perverted cordial. While I consider Christ as the only, the all-sufficient, Saviour from the guilt of sin, I would never forget that he, and he alone, can cleanse us from its pollution, or deliver us from its power,—that he is a Redeemer from all iniquity, who turns away ungodliness from Jacob. Detested be the doctrine, which, in addition to the truth that grace reigns through righteousness, does not represent sin as our greatest misery as well as our greatest crime, and holiness as the very quintessence of true and endless felicity.

In the succeeding part of our correspondence, the word *holiness* will very frequently occur, and it will be of use that you are aware of the precise sense in which I use the term. Holiness, then, evangelical holiness, I consider as consisting in the love of God and of man—that unforced, unfeigned, and most rational love of God which arises from a discovery of his infinite excellence, and especially his unspeakable mercy and kindness to us; that cordial, disinterested, and universal love of man, which flows from the possession of a satisfactory and delightful portion in the Lord Jehovah. These duties to our Creator and to our fellow-creatures, are regarded as the sum and substance of obedience to the moral law. Holiness, considered in this aspect, is not merely nor chiefly the means of our salvation, but is a part, a distinguished part of it—the very central point in which all the means of grace, and all the ordinances of religion, terminate.

But, to prevent mistakes, it will be necessary that I should be somewhat more particular. Holiness may be considered either as *habitual* or *actual*. Habitual holiness consists in a holy frame and disposition of soul, in consequence of which the sanctified individual is reconciled to

that holy law against which his carnal mind was enmity—his inclinations habitually fixing on objects required by the law, and his aversions on objects forbidden by it. From this circumstance, it is represented under the figure of the law written on the heart. Actual holiness is the expression of this inward temper, in holy thoughts, words, and actions.

If we would wish to form accurate views on this important subject, we must always consider evangelical holiness as a *great privilege*, purchased by Christ's blood, offered in the word of grace and promise, secured by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and conferred on us by means of the efficacious influences of the Divine Spirit. We must also steadily contemplate it as a *most important duty* commanded in the law of God—to which we are constrained by his love, and in which we are directed by his pattern, and assisted by his grace. It must farther be viewed as our *most useful business*, by which we honour God, profit our neighbours, and obtain for ourselves a great and a sure reward. How prodigiously important, then, is sanctification!—the end of all the Redeemer's offices—of his humbled life—his ignominious death—his celestial glories—the end of all the operations of the Divine Spirit on Christ and his people—the end of all divine promises and precepts, ordinances of religion, and dispensations of Providence—the end of electing love, redeeming power, regenerating grace, and spiritual consolation !

Many of the most dangerous mistakes respecting sanctification, have originated in ignorance, or inattention to its difference from, and its connection with, justification. An accurate knowledge of these is necessary to prevent us from turning the grace of God into licentiousness on the one hand, and on the other from substituting our own qualities and works in the place of the Redeemer's righteousness. The want of this has, it is to be feared, made many stumble and fall to their own destruction, and an

imperfect degree of it has in many cases prevented the Christian's progress both in holiness and comfort, and subjected him to the spirit of bondage and fear. These two cardinal blessings of the Christian salvation differ in a variety of respects. They differ in their *matter*;—the matter of justification is the righteousness of Christ imputed; that of sanctification is the fulness of Christ communicated, John i. 16. They differ as to the nature of the *change* which they effect; justification makes a *relative*, sanctification a *real*, change; the first changes a man's state—the second his heart and life. They differ in the manner of their *conveyance*. Justification is made ours by the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness, sanctification by the *implantation* of Christ's grace. They differ in their *properties*. Justification is at first complete and perfect—sanctification, imperfect in its beginnings, gradually increases till it be perfected in glory. The *righteousness of justification* is strictly *meritorious*, being the righteousness of God—by which the law is not only fulfilled but magnified; but *the righteousness of sanctification* is not *meritorious*, being only the imperfect righteousness of a sinful creature. Justification is equally possessed by all believers, but all saints are not equally sanctified. They differ in their *subjects*. Christ himself, and not the believer, is the subject of our justifying righteousness; it is inherently in him who wrought it out perfectly for us, but the believer himself is the subject of the righteousness of sanctification. The justifying righteousness is *on the believer* as a robe. The sanctifying righteousness is *in him* as a nature. They differ as to their *order*. They are indeed conferred in the same moment of *time*; but, in the order of nature, justification precedes sanctification, as the cause precedes the effect—as fire precedes light and heat. They differ in their *ingredients*. The main ingredient in justification is the grace and love of God to us manifested in pardoning and accepting us through Christ; the chief ingredient in sanctification is

our gratitude and love to God, flowing from his love to us, and appearing in our obedience to his holy law. They differ as to their *evidence and discernibleness*. Justification is a most secret act of the divine mind ; sanctification is a visible change, proving at once itself and justification. They differ in their *relation to the law of God*. Justification has a reference to the law as a covenant, and frees the soul from its power ; Rom. vii. 4. Sanctification respects the law as a rule, and makes the soul earnestly to desire conformity to it, and to delight in it after the inward man ; Rom. vii. 22. The one is a judicial sentence, absolving us from all liableness to punishment ; the other is a spiritual change, fitting us for the discharge of our duty. They differ in their *relation to the offices of our Redeemer*. Justification is immediately founded on the sacrificial part of his priesthood ; sanctification results from his prophetic instructions, and his kingly powers of conquest, government, and defence. In fine, they differ in their *usefulness* to us. Justification frees us from obnoxiousness to the punishments of hell, and entitles us to the joys of heaven. Sanctification frees us from the slavery and pollution of sin, and prepares us for the celestial enjoyments.

Say not, my Theron, these are the systematic distinctions of speculative men, and useless for the purposes of practical holiness. I have, in order to keep the subject from swelling beyond the limits of a letter, been obliged to make use of more systematic terms than I could have wished ; but I am persuaded, that the more thoroughly you examine the word of God, you will be the more deeply convinced that these doctrines are strictly scriptural.

The danger of confounding two things so distinct, and the importance of distinguishing them, are well pointed out by the judicious and savoury Trail *. “ I am per-

* “ I find,” says Mr Hervey, speaking of the works of this author, “ I find them to be savoury meat, the true manna food for the soul. Mr

suaded that one of the main causes of the disorder that is in the spirits and conversation of the most of Christians, lies in confounding these two great blessings. They do not give them their proper place, they are not rightly exercised about them in their due sphere ; therefore I shall offer a word or two of advice for preventing this confounding of them. When you are seeking justification, let there be no mind of sanctification, I mean as to any merit ; but when you are seeking sanctification, have a good mind to justification. To make this matter plain to you,—when you are seeking justification, you should have no thought of sanctification ;—the reason is, because justification is an act of pure grace, that we must betake ourselves to God as poor criminals and condemned sinners. Let men varnish their doctrines which way they will, and cover them with what pretences they please, they do but murder souls who pretend to advise them to bring something with them to God for the grace of justification. Bring thy sins with thee, and bring the curse of the law upon thy conscience, and lay these before the Lord, saying, Lord, here is an undone sinner, have mercy on me for Christ's sake. There should be nothing else heard there but that. But when you come for sanctification, you have good reason to mind justification, for the one flows from the other. When you would try your justification, in God's name try it by your sanctification ; that is allowed you. The reason is, it is trying a tree by its fruits. In short, they who bring sanctification as a title to their justification, they err the breadth of God's whole heavens ; and they who pretend to the blessing of justification, and cannot justify it by the practice of sanctification, do but deceive themselves."

In fixing our minds on these important distinctions between justification and sanctification, we must not forge

Trail was a workman that needed not to be ashamed. He knew how clearly to state, and solidly to establish, the faith of God's elect, and the doctrine according to godliness."

that they are closely and inseparably connected. According to the Scriptures, they are linked in an indissoluble bond in the decree and promise of God—in the design of the mission, offices, and death of the Saviour—in the call and offer of the Gospel, and in the experience of all the saints. Justification through the blood of Jesus has indeed a most powerful influence in the production and increase of evangelical holiness. It is true, the doctrine has often been represented, and generally believed (my friend can recollect the period when he was the dupe of this prejudice), to be hostile to the interests of real sanctity. In every such case, there has been misrepresentation, either through ignorance or malignity. The treatment this doctrine has received, is somewhat similar to what fell to the lot of its strenuous supporters, the primitive Christians. *Their* persecutors, with a horrid ingenuity in the art of tormenting, used to dress them up in the skins of animals, and then cast them as a prey to wild beasts. *Its* enemies first clothe it in a licentious garb, and then call on the friends of virtue to detest it.

I have no doubt that this doctrine, in itself so salutary, is liable to abuse, and has in fact been abused. A man whose acquaintance with this doctrine is superficial, or, though extensive and accurate, is merely speculative, may very likely abuse it, and will most certainly derive no sanctifying influence from it. It will not, however, be difficult to convince your candid mind, especially as I may now appeal to your own experience as evidence of the truth of what I say, that this doctrine, properly understood, and really believed, has not only a powerful influence in making men holy, but it is the only effectual means of producing true holiness. Unjustified men are under the curse of the divine law, which, while it continues in force, opposes an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the production of evangelical holiness in the human heart. This curse of the law, though in itself most holy, renders it inconsistent with the moral excellencies of the divinity

to communicate to those who are under it spiritual good. Of consequence, it binds men under the influences of sin, and seals up all sanctifying influences from their souls. It were not a more absurd expectation that when, by the influence of the frost, the clods stick fast together, the earth should be clothed with the verdure of spring, the luxuriance of summer, or mellow richness of autumn, than that when man is cut off from the source of all spiritual life and beauty, he should bring forth the fruits of holiness. The fig-tree blasted by the Saviour's curse soon withered away—striking emblem of that scene of spiritual barrenness and desolation which overspreads the mind which God has pronounced accursed. By the justification of the sinner through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, this obstacle, otherwise insurmountable, is removed. The wall of adamant which refused all access to the “fountain of gardens, the water of life” into the barren soil of the human heart, is levelled with the ground—and now God, in consistency with his own holiness, can render us holy. In *consistency* with his own holiness, did I say? He stands, I speak it with reverence, He stands irrevocably engaged to employ all his perfections in bestowing on the justified person holiness of heart and life, as a principal part of that salvation to which his justifying sentence has adjudged us; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. The blood of Christ applied to the conscience, is represented by an Apostle as purging it from dead works to serve the living God; Heb. ix. 14.

This doctrine farther believed, in reference to our own particular case, furnishes the most powerful motives to universal holiness. The views which it gives us of the excellencies of the divine character, and especially of the goodness of God to us, have a plain tendency to excite that love of God which is the seminal principle of all holiness. The wondrous love of God and of Christ; the holiness and equity of his law; its high and indispensable obligations on us as a rule; the infinite vileness, danger, ma-

lignity and demerit of sin ; the beauty, dignity, and usefulness, of evangelical holiness ; the perfect pattern of the Redeemer ; the promise of grace to enable us to imitate it ; and the prospect of a gracious yet most abundant reward for this imitation ; all these, and a thousand other motives, operate with an invincible force on the justified sinner, inducing him to cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God *. These are not, my dear friend, what they have sometimes been said to be, mere theological niceties. Properly to understand these truths, is no vulgar attainment in Christian theology—experimentally to know them, is the very essence of Christian godliness.

The evangelical holiness of which we are speaking, is not the spontaneous production of the human heart. The doctrine of Scripture plainly is, that all mankind are by nature unholy ; and this doctrine is supported by the united voice of experience and observation. He who is intimately acquainted with the principles of the human constitution, and the tempers and conduct of all mankind, has solemnly declared, that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually. One man may have naturally a more amiable temper than another, but all, all are depraved. The noble structure of man's original excellence is swept away as by the besom of destruction. An image, in all its features a frightful contrast to the moral image of divinity, is to be found in every heart. Deceitful above all things and desperately wicked is its name. Ignorance, atheism, unbelief, pride, malice, revenge, unbridled appetite, and

* “ In the name of all believers,” says one, “ being justified by Christ, we seek to be renewed in the inner man after his holy pattern. We covet earnestly to have the same mind in us which also was in our divine Master. We look upon it as our privilege to draw nigh to God in all the duties of devotion. We would not discontinue them for a thousand worlds. We prize holiness as a most choice part of our happiness,—a blessing purchased by the blood of our adorable High Priest. We therefore press forward as racers press forward to the goal, or the chased hart flies to the water brooks.”—*Hervey's Letters*, published 1811.

inordinate desire, with all their detestable associates and followers, possess the place which was once occupied by the love of God. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." We must all own, that we are as unclean things, and need to pray, "Create in me a clean heart. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." While in this situation we are not only unholy, but the way of our being made holy is totally unknown to us. Nature's light teaches, that we should abstain from direct injustice, violence, and impurity; but of the nature and extent of true holiness, and especially of the manner of its production, we are altogether ignorant. The way of sanctification revealed in the Gospel,—and this is, indeed, the only way,—lies quite beyond the sphere of human reason's discovery. Had all the philosophers in the world consulted together about a method of restoring the lost image of God to the mind of man, they never could have discovered that plan which well merits the appellation, "the manifold wisdom of God." *Sanctification in Christ Jesus*,—*Christ made of God to us Sanctification*,—*Sanctification by faith which is in Christ*, are ideas which it never could have entered into the heart of man to conceive; and even when this divine plan is revealed, unenlightened men, however naturally gifted, consider it as foolishness, and obstinately refuse to prove its efficacy. Whenever man has directed his mind to this subject, he has discovered a bias to the original constitution under which he was placed,—the covenant of works. The truth of this remark must strike you, when you cast a glance over those immense regions of the world where revelation is unknown, and where Paganism in its various forms, and the superstition of Mahomet, maintain their sway. They all agree in this one principle, that by doing we are to live, though they differ widely as to what is to be done in order to life. It is, however, impossible that man should be made really holy by any of these me-

thods. They want the sanction of Him who is the source of all true holiness, and whose divine appointment and blessing are necessary to make any plan the ministration of righteousness to the race of man; and it deserves to be noticed, that, so far from making men holy, where these human devices, which, very undeservedly, have received the name of rational religion *, prevail, to the exclusion of the doctrine of sanctification through the righteousness and grace of Christ, an increase of licentious conduct has been the constant result. Of this we have a striking illustration in Popery †, that grand apostacy equally from truth and holiness. On the other hand, you who have read ecclesiastical history with so much attention, need not be told, that a thorough reformation in nations and churches has uniformly been preceded and produced by a clear exhibition of the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us, then, my friend, in our researches into the nature of true holiness, and the means of its attainment, fix our hopes of success entirely on the gracious assistance of the God of truth and holiness, and let this be our prayer, "Open thou our eyes, that we may behold wonderful things out of thy law." The nature of true holiness is but very imperfectly understood, even by many Chris-

* "I dread mightily, that a rational sort of religion is coming in among us. I mean by this, a religion that consists in a bare attendance on outward duties and ordinances, without the power of godliness, and thence people shall fall into a way of serving God, which is mere Deism, having no relation to Christ Jesus, and the Spirit of God."—*Halyburton's Memoirs*, a book in which the Christian, and especially the Christian minister, may find much important instruction.

† "We are persuaded, that a vast majority of the errors in religion may be traced to that unremitting and indefatigable desire of the natural mind to do without Christ. In this respect, Popery is to be considered not as the chance religion of a country or an age, as a church accidentally founded and cemented by the labours and arts of a few cardinals and pontiffs; it is to be considered as the true ANTICHRIST, the religion of human nature; as the grand confederation of mankind to get rid of Christ; as an organized effort to substitute a sort of gilded machinery for that grand pillar of salvation, pardon by the free grace of God, and through the atoning blood of his Son."—*Review of Hesse's Life of Zuingle*, CHRISTIAN OBSERVER, March 1812.

tians. On this subject I request your closest attention. Some men mistake mere *civility* for holiness. This quality or rather this collection of qualities, is amiable and useful; but surely a man may be not rude, but, on the contrary, courteous, discreet, and obliging, and yet quite a stranger to true holiness. Such a person was the young man of whom we read in the Gospel that he answered discreetly, that our Lord loved him, and that he was not far from the kingdom of God. Yet this man, so amiable, was not holy; for when our Lord proposed to him that he should part with his possessions and follow him, he went away sorrowful indeed, but we have no reason to think that he ever returned. Another class, somewhat better informed, mistake mere *morality* for real holiness. By morality they mean honesty and humanity; in one word, a moderate degree of external conformity to the divine precepts *. This is, in Scripture terms, "the form of godliness;" and it is plainly intimated, that a person may have this who is entirely a stranger to the power of religion. Men may go the round of external duty, and yet be entirely destitute of the love of God, the essential principle of true holiness. The Pharisee whom God condemned, fasted twice a-week, and gave alms of all that he possessed; (Luke xviii. 12.) We read of men who without were beautiful, but within were full of all uncleanness. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God;" (Matth. v. 20.) The following is a description of very bad men: "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance

* "Woe!" says Dr Owen, "to the professors of the gospel, who shall be seduced to believe, that all they have to do with God consists in their attention to moral virtue. In the mean time we affirm, we design nothing in virtue or morality but to improve them, by fixing them on a proper foundation, or engrafting them into that stock whereon alone they will thrive, and grow to the glory of God, and to the good of the souls of men."

of their God. They ask of me the ordinances of justice, they take delight in approaching to God ;" (Isaiah lviii. 2.) The difference between these and true holiness is wide and important. They are different in their *origin*. Evangelical holiness springs from union to the Redeemer's person, and the indwelling and operation of his Spirit. But these modes of conduct above described have a far lower origin ; springing generally from a good education, a sense of decency, a prudent regard to interest, a respect to character, or legal convictions. They differ as to their *subjects*. Evangelical holiness diffuses itself over the whole man, soul, body, and spirit ; it influences the thoughts and dispositions, as well as the language and conduct. " If any be in Christ he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new ;" (2 Cor. v. 17.) The other habits are mere external white-washings. They give their possessors a specious appearance, while ignorance, unbelief, enmity against God, rancour against serious godliness, and every lust of the spirit, remain in their unbroken force. They may, in fact, produce a new life in some measure, but they leave the old nature unchanged. They differ in their *extent*. True holiness extends to all that God commands and forbids. They who possess it have a respect to all God's commandments ; the whole law is written in every believing heart, and every saint is holy in all manner of conversation. Where men are merely civil or moral, in the sense in which we use the words, they attend merely to detached parts of the divine law ; they do not even attempt to be wholly conformed to it in all its spirituality and extent ; and they allow themselves in the neglect of many duties which it enjoins. They differ in their *nature*. True holiness is, if I may use the expression, a cluster of the fruits of the Spirit, (how much more delicious and valuable than the grapes of Eshcol !) I can give no better account of it than the Apostle has given. It consists of " love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, tem-

perance," all fruits of the Spirit. It is otherwise with the temper and conduct dictated merely by civility and morality: They have self-love in an unrenewed heart as their principle. The reason for men under their influence preferring a particular mode of action, is not the revealed will of God, but some far inferior consideration. Their conduct does not flow from the faith of Jesus' direction, assistance, and acceptance. They depend on their own innate vigour; they seldom think whether their actions will be accepted or not by the Supreme Judge; and when they do think of this, the ground of their hope of acceptance is the intrinsic merit of their conduct. Their end is not the divine glory, but individual advantage. Self is their spring, their motive, their measure, their end.

If such, then, is the doctrine of Scripture, my friend—if man is naturally unholy—if he is unable to discover the true mode of obtaining holiness—if he is very apt to take up with certain habits as substitutes for true holiness, it is certainly a very interesting question,—a question most closely connected with your eternal interest and mine, my friend; (for without holiness no man can see the Lord)—How are we to be made truly holy? To this question I reply, Only by being brought under the covenant of grace. "Sin," says the Apostle Paul, in his wonderful illustration of the mystery of sanctification, "sin shall not have dominion over you, *for* ye are not under the law, but under grace." Now this passage obviously intimates, that we must be delivered from the law, in the apostle's sense of the word, and brought under grace, before we can be freed from the dominion of sin. That law requires the sinner to do what he is, in consequence of his own depravity, incapable of doing, that is, most disinclined to do; and requires him to do this under the most dreadful penalty. It promises him nothing, but it threatens every thing. What is the natural consequence? The requisitions of the law irritate his corrupt passions;

he sinks in despair, or is exasperated against the God who condemns and curses him. When "the commandment comes" to an irregenerate sinner, "sin revives." The law is not the appointed channel for the conveyance of sanctifying influence. It is "weak through the flesh:" and the condemnation of sin in the flesh is to it an impossibility. But "what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh," God has done through means of the everlasting covenant. Through its medium, the most depraved may be made holy, as well as the most guilty righteous. "Christ," the head of the covenant, "is of God made to us sanctification." "His blood cleanseth from all sin: and his Spirit, holy in himself, is possessed of an infinite power to render all who submit to his influence holy. The promises of the covenant have, many of them, holiness expressly for their subject; and all of them have a tendency to lead those who have embraced them, to "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit." Indeed, one great design of this covenant, was to promote the glory of God in the sanctification of sinners. The object of the covenant is, "that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." Holiness is, as it were, the central point in which all its lines meet. The righteous condition of the covenant—the gracious promises of the covenant—the wise and powerful administration of the covenant, all conduce to render it a fit means for the transmission of holiness to the children of men. If we would then be holy, we must take hold of this covenant as exhibited to sinners in the Gospel. The only way in which a sinner can obtain an interest in the blessings of the covenant, is by an union with our Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the covenant*; and this union is formed by believing in him.

* "We must come to the covenant of grace for our first faith, and fetch it thence. The Spirit, by the outward proposal of the covenant, kindles faith in us, by which we cast ourselves upon the free grace of

In evangelical holiness, union with Christ is always supposed. This doctrine of believers' mystical union with Christ, whereby he is their source of spiritual influence, is of vast importance in the Christian system; and it is revealed in Scripture * with an explicitness suited to its importance. "Surely, shall one say, *in the Lord* have I righteousness and strength." "*In the Lord* shall all the house of Israel be justified, and *in him* shall they glory." "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." He is said to be "in them the hope of glory." They are "members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." They are "one spirit" with him. They are the body, of which he is the head,—the building of which he is the foundation,—the branches of the tree, of which he is the stock and the root.

I will not attempt to explain what I believe to be inexplicable, but must be allowed to remark, that on no just principles of interpretation can these passages be explained of a mere external relation, as of subjects to a king, or servants to a master. They cannot be considered as expressive of less than that believers are in Christ as their head of righteousness and source of holy influence.

This union is formed at the moment of conversion. Our Lord Jesus is exhibited and offered to us in the Gospel, as made of God to us sanctification. We, by his power, are enabled to lay hold of him, or, in other words, to believe in him; and are thus, by the holy and merciful constitution of God, joined with him in an everlasting covenant. In this exercise, the soul may often have directly in view

God in Christ. Do this, and then look for the law written in your hearts, for the Spirit of God, and for all the fruits of the Spirit, in your repentance, love, obedience, holy walking with God. All graces flow from the Covenant of grace. Pray that God may give you a heart to assent to and close with Christ, upon the terms of the covenant, and see if all be not made good to you."—*Cole's Sermons*.

* The reader will find an excellent account of this doctrine in Dickinson's *Letters* and Coutt's *Sermons*.

some particular benefit, such as pardon of sin, direction and holiness ; but it is still the person of the Redeemer that we are united to ; for it is only in, through, and with him, that we desire and expect the possession of any blessing. Sometimes this is done by a bold claim of the Saviour as offered to us ; at other times, earnest desires, mingled with much doubt and fear, form the leading feeling of the mind. I trust you and I can recollect the time of love, when, claiming a dear Redeemer, we were united to Him, or recognised our union. Our feelings have been well described in the words of a writer very estimable for his piety, and whose poetry will not be harshly criticised by those who can relish his sentiments.

O glorious Christ ! O beauty, beauty rare,
 Ten thousand, thousand heavens are not so fair.
 In him at once all beauties meet and shine,
 The white and ruddy,—human and divine.
 But wilt thou, Lord, in very deed, come dwell
 With me that was a burning brand of hell ?
 Wilt thou debase thy high imperial form,
 To match with such a mortal crawling worm ?
 Yea, sure thy errand to our earthly coast
 Was in deep love—to seek and save the lost.
 And since thou deign'st the like of me to wed,
 O come and make my heart thy marriage bed.
 Fair Jesus, wilt thou marry filthy me ?
 Amen, Amen, Amen ! so let it be !—ERSKINE.

While unconnected with Christ, no sanctifying influence can be communicated to us ; and none of our duties can be accepted of God ; but, united to *him*, all obstructions in the way of the communication of transforming grace are removed, and we and our services “are accepted in the Beloved.” Unconnected with him, we have no access to the fountain of sanctifying influence. United to him, we “receive out of his fulness, and grace for grace.” Being “*in him*,” we not only have “no condemnation,” but we “walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.” Being “*in him*” we are “new creatures.”—*In him* we are the sons of God ; and, in consequence of this relation, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our God

and Father in him, is bound by his own promise to make us holy. United to the Redeemer, we are made partakers of his Spirit, who is the Spirit of sanctification. Of the Spirit there is a fulness in Christ ; a fulness, not as of a vessel which merely retains what is put into it, but as of a fountain always flowing, yet always full. He, then, who is united to the Saviour, must be a partaker of his Spirit, and he who partakes of his Spirit must be holy.

These remarks may help us still farther to distinguish between true holiness, and that false appearance, that mere shadow of it, which is too frequently to be met with among professors of Christianity. The one is derived entirely from the divine source of union with the Saviour ;—the other, however specious may be its appearance, is the mere result of human operations. The true saint receives his holiness from Christ—the great storehouse of sanctifying influence ; the mere professor derives his apparent sanctity only from the unassisted exertion of his own faculties.

This doctrine of union to Christ being the source of true holiness, places, in a strong point of light, the absurdity of a principle which some very good men have incautiously advanced, that certain holy qualifications are requisite, in order to our having a right, or in order to its being our duty, to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing is more certain than this, that no sinner will ever apply to Christ as a Saviour, till he be convinced that he needs salvation, that he cannot save himself, and that there is no salvation but in Christ. Of consequence it must be the duty of every Gospel minister to preach the law, as a schoolmaster bringing men to Christ. But though no man will ever believe in Christ till thus convinced, yet that this conviction, or any thing else, is necessary to warrant him, or to make it his duty to believe in Christ, is a doctrine nowhere taught in the Holy Scriptures. The invitation and command to believe in Christ are expressed in the most general terms which

language can furnish ; and even the worst of men—"the stout-hearted and far from righteousness,"—are urged to come to him. A contrary doctrine in effect robs Christ of his honours as the sole Saviour of sinners ; it leads sinners to expect the first motions towards believing from their own hearts, while "dead in trespasses and sins," and it will be found in fact absolutely impossible to reduce it to practice. Instead of facilitating the sinner's approach to the Saviour, it throws important obstacles in his way, and leads him to spend that time in doubtful disputation, about the kind, measure, and degree of his qualifications for Christ, which would have been far better employed in a direct application to the Saviour for all he needs.

As this doctrine which I am opposing is the natural expression of the feelings of every merely convinced sinner, and one principal cause of preventing the production and growth of real holiness, let me direct your attention to the sentiments of three accurate divines on the subject. "Say not, Unless I find some measure of sanctification, what right have I to apply him as my righteousness? This inverts the order, and prejudices thee of both. Thou must first, without finding, yea, or seeking any thing in thyself, but misery and guiltiness, lay hold on him as thy righteousness, or else thou shalt never find sanctification by any other endeavour or pursuit. He it is that is made sanctification, and out of him we seek it in vain. Now, first he must be thy righteousness before thou find him thy sanctification. Simply as a guilty sinner must thou flee to him for shelter. Then being come in, thou shalt be furnished out of his fulness, with grace for grace. As a poor man pursued by the justiciary, flying to a strong castle for safety, and being in it, finds it a rich palace, and all his wants supplied there. This misunderstanding of that method is the cause of so much darkness and discomfort, and withal of that deadness and defect of graces, that many persons go drooping who will not take this way, the only straight and sure way of life

and comfort." These are the words of that heavenly man Archbishop Leighton, who, for purity of doctrine and devotion of temper, rises far above the great body even of orthodox divines. Let us now listen to a nonconformist divine, less known than he deserves, (Petto,) on the same interesting subject. "If ever men arrive at special grace, it is the fruit, the result of an absolute promise; for as all first grace is contained therein, so till that be accomplished in them, no qualifications or conditions are wrought in their souls, altering their state, or which are acceptable and pleasing unto God. The instant before quickening, souls were "dead in trespasses and sins;" Eph. ii. 3. Immediately before reconciliation, they stood at enmity against the Lord; Col. i. 21. The moment before sanctification, they were under sin and pollution. It is groundlessly, therefore, that any souls stand off from Jesus Christ, and the free promise, upon the account of the want of any qualifications. They should immediately close with him therein, as the way to gracious qualifications, which are derived to them from the absolute promise. The Lord hath not warranted any soul to stay one moment before closing with Christ, upon the want of any qualification. Indeed if he had, then he must testify his allowance of their persisting so long in unbelief, whereas that is hateful and abominable*." Let us now hear the truly great Dr Owen on this topic. "God is said to sanctify us as the "God of peace," just because it is an effect and fruit of that peace with himself, which he hath made and prepared for us by Jesus Christ; for "he was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself," destroying the enmity which entered by sin; and, secondly, because God, by the sanctification of our natures and persons, preserves that peace with himself, in its exercise, which he made and procured by the mediation of Jesus Christ. In the duties and fruits thereof consist all those

* Petto on the Covenants.

actings towards God, which a state of reconciliation and friendship does require."

The author of sanctification is a redeeming God—a God in Christ—the God of peace—the God of all grace and salvation—the Lord our judge—our lawgiver and king. The blessed Father, as the Father of Christ, and their Father in him, sanctifies them through the truth. The Redeemer also is their sanctifier; for they are "washed and sanctified through the name of our Lord Jesus," who is made of God to them sanctification. But this work is chiefly ascribed in Scripture to the operation of the divine Spirit. "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified," says the Apostle, "by the Spirit of our God."

The moving cause of our sanctification is the free sovereign grace of God. The gift of holiness is an eminent gift of God. When God makes a man holy, he does more for him than if he would give him the gold of both the Indies, or make him the monarch of the world. All this beauty of holiness is free favour to an unholy sinner, even as the sun shines freely without hire. There is nothing in an unholy sinner pleasing to God. Till renewed by the sanctifying influences of the divine Spirit, the best natural dispositions and actions are sinful; and though there is no doubt a great difference among natural men, yet the communication of sanctifying influence is not regulated according to this difference.—It fixes on some of the most rugged and depraved, while some of the sweetest tempers are left under the influence of depravity; and it selects frequently, for the period of changing the sinner, the term of their greatest infatuation and wickedness; that, as in the case of Manasse and Saul of Tarsus, the sovereign freedom and the invincible energy of divine grace may be manifested. It becomes you and me, my friend, humbly and gratefully to acknowledge, that if there is, as we trust there is, some good thing in us towards the God of Israel, it is entirely owing to the sovereign, free, unmerited favour of God.

As sanctification cannot be enjoyed by any whose state has not been changed by union to Christ, so it is to be found only in those whose characters have been transformed by the regenerating influences of the divine Spirit. No man can be holy who is not "born again," "created anew in Christ Jesus," and thus made a partaker of a "divine nature." It is a fatal mistake, under which many labour, that the living under the Christian dispensation, and in the observance of the external ordinances of the Christian church, is all that is requisite for entitling a person to the appellation of regenerate. We find, however, Simon Magus, after his baptism, represented as being "in the gall of bitterness." Many who are baptised, and enjoy the advantages of the New Testament dispensation, have nothing of Christianity but the name. Good education is not regeneration. This may restrain from external outrages, but it cannot change the heart.—It may polish the exterior, and tame the wildness of human nature, but it leaves the springs of action unaltered—it cannot remove their depravity. We have a striking illustration of these remarks in the case of Joash, the king of Judah. He had received a wise and religious education from Jehoiada the high-priest, and so long as he lived he walked in the ways of the Lord; but the death of his teacher was the death of his piety. An abandonment of vices, to which we were formerly addicted, is not regeneration. This may be done, and yet our righteousness may not exceed, or even equal, the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Even though we should be distinguished by our strict observance of many duties, we must not from this conclude that we are born again. Saul, before his conversion, lived according to the strictest form of the Jewish religion. Sharp convictions do not necessarily prove that we have undergone this change, else Pharaoh, Judas, and Simon Magus, were regenerated. It will be dangerous for us to draw this inference, even from violent movements of the affections.—Esau

sought the blessing with many tears ; the stony ground hearers received the word with joy ; and the hypocritical professors, in the time of Isaiah, took delight in approaching to God.

The change is in Scripture represented as the creation of a new man—a change pervading the whole frame of the mind, and consisting in a radical alteration of its tempers and habits. The result of this change is a *divine nature*, proceeding from God, resembling his moral image, disposing to his fellowship, and leading to his enjoyment. Regeneration may be described as a great, universal, inward, complete, and supernatural change, consisting in making the subject of it pursue the glory of God as the great end of his conduct, and leading him to rest in God as his chief happiness, and manifesting itself in new apprehensions, affections, and habits, in reference to spiritual things *. In this radical change originates true holiness, which increases gradually till the saint becomes a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

From the view which we have taken of sanctification and regeneration, as arising from the free operation of divine influence, we must beware of drawing the conclusion, that God's grace supersedes the necessity of our endeavours. Our dutiful exertions, and God's gracious influences, so far from opposing each other, harmoniously co-operate in the great work of sanctification. Some legal teachers would separate these as entirely incongruous. A command, they seem to think, leaves no room for a promise ; and a promise detracts from the authoritative influence of a command. These men, however, greatly err. To both the divine promise and command we ought, and, if we are really sanctified, we will yield a due regard. As to the divine command, we will have our consciences impressed with a sense of its supreme authority, because it is the command of God ; our judgment convinced of its reasonableness, equity, holiness, and useful-

* See Boston's *Fourfold State* ; and Witherspoon on *Regeneration*.

ness, and our affections fixed on it as morally lovely. On the other hand, we will have a constant reference to the divine promise. Under a habitual sense of our own inability to comply with the divine command, from any power in ourselves, we adore that kindness which hath provided help for us, we rely on the promise for supplies of grace to enable us to perform every duty.

Let us never forget that it is *Christian* holiness of which we are speaking,—holiness derived from Christ,—effected by his grace in the heart, and exemplified in the life through his continued supplies of spiritual strength. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think even a good thought; “but our sufficiency is of God.” We desire the enjoyment of Christ, and perfect conformity to him, in faith, humility, and every grace. Nothing but *Christ* will satisfy a sanctified soul. The predominant wish is, “that they may be found *in him*.” No frame, however pleasing, must be the ground of our hope. Jesus himself is “all our salvation and all our desire.” All graces and duties, prayers and tears, are connected with Christ, and washed in the fountain opened *. Never, never let us forget, that all our attempts to be holy, in a natural state, must necessarily be vain. In dwelling on this truth, I am far from wishing to give men an excuse for remaining under the dominion of their corrupted desires; but I do wish to set them right respecting the true method of seeking holiness. No man can seek holiness too eagerly, if he but seek it in the due order. No man can be holy too soon. But by attempting to be holy in a way

* Would we wish to see our people replenished with the love of God and men, and abounding in all the fruits of holiness, this way is plain before us. In the Gospel it is fully delineated. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Let us lead our hearers to Christ—let us bring them to his Cross. There let us begin, and there let us end with them, being determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Let us, (to use the words of a lively writer) ingraft them into Christ by faith, and we shall quickly find them budding with every precious grace, and loaded with the fruits of good works. Morison's *Sermon before the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr*, on 1 Cor. ix. 16.

not sanctioned by the divine appointment, we may place ourselves at a greater distance from evangelical holiness than ever. It is folly to look for good fruit on an ungrafted tree. Not less foolish is it to expect a new life without a new heart. Many men, in a natural state, suppose (and the delusion is cherished by too many public instructors) that, in order to be holy, they have nothing to do but to reform their lives, according to God's law, not recollecting, or not knowing, that men must be quickened before they can act—that the person must be accepted before his services can be acceptable.

The first duty of a sinner is certainly to receive the record of God concerning his Son, to rely on Christ Jesus as an all-sufficient Saviour, that *in him*, and *from him*, he may receive that change of heart and state, disposition and situation, which is necessary in order to true holiness. Even this advice, however, may be given in such a manner as in a great measure to render it useless. The Gospel preacher, in urging to the duty of believing, must enforce the command by evangelical motives. He must direct the mind of a sinner to the freely promised assistance of the divine Spirit. He must represent faith as the gift of God. To command men to believe without stating these truths, is but a mere refined method of bidding them enter into life by keeping the commandments. While faith, or the act of believing, is certainly the sinner's duty, faith, or that divine principle which disposes us to this act, is a privilege purchased by Christ Jesus, freely given to men, and communicated by the effectual operation of the divine Spirit.

Protracted discussion, even of the most pleasing subject, will fatigue the most willing and attentive hearer. Lest you should have in your own feelings an exemplification of this remark, I will bring this long letter to a conclusion, by offering you a few directions as to the best, indeed the only, method of improving in evangelical holiness, which I have long endeavoured to reduce to practice

in my own conduct ; and can, from experience of their utility, heartily recommend to my friend.

I. The true nature of holiness, and its manifold ingredients, must be learned with the utmost attention and care. This is a subject on which even some otherwise well-informed persons labour under much misconception and error. Many mistake a profession of religion, a blameless external conduct, and an attention to the forms of devotion, for true holiness. The true nature and ingredients of sanctification are to be learned from the scriptures of truth—and an attentive consideration to the covenant of grace, and the situation, with its various relations, in which it has seemed good to Providence to place us. It is a matter of high importance habitually to consider holiness as a most important privilege. Some consider it merely in the light of duty to be performed as the condition of life ;—this is an impious and foolish attempt to change the ground of a sinner's hope—to overthrow the whole building of grace. Others, still deceived, though not so widely, consider it merely as a mean of obtaining eternal life *. This notion produces a fond conceit, that happiness is something distinct from holiness ; as if the felicity of an intelligent being did not consist in conformity to the moral image of God. Nothing is more certain than this, that sin to such a being is degradation and misery ; and holiness, dignity and happiness. True holiness is then a most important privilege, an essential part of that salvation which, purchased by the Saviour's precious

* We are, says an eminent writer, but legalists still, however we may change our form and name, while we prize holiness, or the fruits of it, only as means to an end, and are merely seeking to be holy in order to be happy. This is mere selfishness and legalism. The true Gospel spirit seeks holiness and the fruits of it, as an end for his own sake ; so we rest in the beauty of holiness. The language of the Gospel spirit is, I am legally holy in the blood of Christ ; I am happy in my reconciliation with my God ; I wait in the expectation of eternal glory, and I prize the overcoming and getting the better of my evil desires and vile affections, and my heart's being brought to a full conformity to God's will, as an end for itself, as I like honey for its own sake.

blood, is to be enjoyed in union to his person, and through the medium of the influence of his Spirit. Endeavour, my dear friend, to habituate yourself to such views of holiness, considering it not as in any degree the condition of justification, but as one of the most distinguishing privileges of justified men—the brightest ornament of a rational nature, the nearest resemblance we can obtain to our all-perfect Creator.

I have met lately with some very admirable observations on this subject, in a sermon by the judicious Boston, from Luke i. 74, 75, which will, much better than any thing I could say, express my sentiments on this subject. “The great thing promised in the covenant of grace is, that we *shall* serve the Lord; as the great thing commanded in the covenant of works is, that we *should* serve him. This is that which was purchased by Christ, and is promised to poor sinners who believe on him, that, for his sake, God will give them to serve him. And this, our serving God, is the great benefit of the covenant bestowed on believers for Christ’s sake. Indeed, the sanctification of sinners is the subordinate end of the covenant of grace, standing next to the glory of God,—and faith, justification, deliverance from the law, sin, death, and the devil, are subordinated to sanctification, as means for reaching the end. Therefore the covenant hath its full perfection or accomplishment in heaven, where the man is so sanctified as to serve God perfectly, and to work perfectly good works. Oh! that men would learn this lesson, that any service we do to God, if right service, is a benefit of the covenant bestowed on us for Christ’s sake;—then would they learn that God is not debtor to them for it, but they are debtors to free grace on that very score, and that the more they do for God, and the better they do it, they are always the deeper in free grace’s debt;—then would ye also learn, that the only way for a sinner to be brought to serve the Lord, is to embrace the covenant for that very end. Men are not

to embrace the covenant, because they have served the Lord, as unhumiliated sinners are apt to suppose, but to embrace the covenant that they may be made to serve the Lord. This benefit of the covenant includes—the being admitted to serve God—the being furnished with strength to serve him, and the having our service accepted of him.”

II. Maintain a firm dependence on the blessed Jesus set forth in the Gospel *. It is thus alone that holiness is produced, and it is thus alone that holiness is promoted. It is not uncommonly supposed, that devotion, temperance, justice, and benevolence, constitute the whole of the character of a real Christian—a good man. Far be it from me to derogate from the importance of any moral excellence. I consider each and all of them as highly important and necessary ;—but I must remark, that the word of God holds very different language in delineating the character of the truly good man, from what is ordinarily current in the world. It divides men to whom the Gospel is preached into two classes, believers and unbelievers. It speaks much of men’s faith giving the stamp to their character ; and, when it bestows commendations, a large proportion of them falls to the share of faith. Is it intended to give us a high idea of the moral excellence or holiness of any individual, particular notice is taken of his faith. Thus Abraham is represented as strong in *faith*—Stephen as full of *faith*—and the *faith* of the Roman Christians was spoken of throughout all the world.

The truth is, that all the sobriety, justice and humanity,—the penitence and devotion which can meet in one character, without faith, could not make us holy ; for it is only as proceeding from faith that any of these qualities or tempers have the nature of true holiness. “ Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Accordingly,

* Here lies God’s order to bring a soul to Christ, and then he is brought to holiness. Man’s order is to bring him to holiness, that he may come to Christ ;—but this is to try to wash the Ethiopian white.

we find that the Apostles, in their writings, inculcate all other duties by arguments which derive most of their force from the circumstance, that they to whom they are addressed are considered as believers in Christ. They bid them consider God as their Father; the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, by whom they are redeemed, called, justified, and sanctified; and the Holy Ghost as their enlightener, guide, and comforter. From these topics, considered as believed by those whom they address, they urge the performance of religious and moral duties. The same remark is applicable to the Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, which abounds in such sublime and beautiful moralities. He uniformly directs his audience to consider God as their heavenly Father, and to trust, love, and serve him in this character. Now, the only way in which we can be made the children of God, is "by faith in Christ Jesus." Let us, then, my dear Theron, anxiously desiring to be holy, as our Father is holy, see the promises, be persuaded of them, and embrace them. Let us receive and rest on Christ Jesus for salvation and for holiness, as a principal part of salvation. Having our hearts purified by faith, let us thereby work righteousness.

III. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. The divine word must be carefully perused, seriously meditated on, firmly remembered, and scrupulously reduced to practice. This word is the incorruptible seed, from which springs the fruits of righteousness. Let us then endeavour to bring forth fruit corresponding to the various parts of scriptural truth. From the word of instruction let us learn wisdom, and prove, in our experience, that "the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Let the word of terror induce us immediately to take proper measures for relief. Like Noah, who, "being warned of God, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Let the words of consolation induce us to "rejoice in the Lord always." Let the word of promise be received and relied on, as

most true and certain. From the descriptions of the divine Excellence, let us learn to imitate whatever is imitable in God. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, let us be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. When we read the history of the holy fellowship of patriarchs and prophets, apostles and evangelists, martyrs and confessors, let us emulate their excellence, and "be followers of those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises." Let us bring our states and character to the touchstone of the trying passages of scripture, and let this be our prayer, "Search me, O Lord, and try me, know my heart and my reins, see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Carefully perusing God's precepts, let us receive them, and say, "All that the Lord hath commanded us we will hear and do. I will keep the commandments of my God."

IV. Never forget, my dear friend, your former state and character. We find the Apostle giving this advice to the Ephesian Christians, "Remember that ye, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision, by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that at times ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise; having no hope, and being without God in the world." In the same spirit, he reminds the Corinthians, that some of them had been guilty of the most detestable impurities. He never could forget his own previous state and character; and no doubt the recollection of it was highly useful, as the means of strengthening his holy temper, and urging him on to the performance of holy actions. "I was before," says he, "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious;" 1 Tim. i. 13. Forgetfulness of the Christian's original state and character, tends to weaken his sense of the obligations he is under to the grace of God, and to the condescension and kindness of the Lord Jesus. It cools our love to him,

and renders our hands slack in his service. On the other hand, the habitual recollection of it stimulates to every duty, and tends particularly to make us gentle and humble. We ought to "speak evil of no man, but be gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men, *for* we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Did we but habitually remember, that it is wholly owing to the love and kindness of God our Saviour, that we are distinguished from an ungodly and profligate world, and that, without daily fresh supplies of the spirit of Christ, we would act in all respects as sinfully and unreasonably as the worst of our neighbours; how would the recollection repress the risings of tumultuous passions, and fill our hearts with gentleness and love? Humility is a grace nearly allied to meekness, and nothing so directly tends to make us humble, exceedingly humble, as the recollection of what we were by nature, and what we still are, except so far as renewed by the grace of the Saviour. It is because we forget what we really are, that we are ever proud; and the more constantly we keep in view our real character and situation, the more will we be disposed to comply with the apostle's exhortation, "In lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves."

V. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. The graces the Christian is called on to cultivate, the duties he is called on to perform, the afflictions he is required to bear, the enemies with whom he is called to encounter, are very numerous. Alarmed at the weight of his burden and his own weakness, what course shall the dejected saint take? Let him, says the philosopher, call in the aid of reflection and reason, consider the dignity of his nature, resolve to act the part of a man, and exert all the hidden energies of his constitution in this trying and evil hour. Let him, says the rational divine, resolve to do his best; let him sincerely desire and endeavour to comply with God's

will, and God will give him assistance. The Gospel of Christ gives us a very different direction. Let him rest in faith and love on Christ, the strength of Israel; on Him who has said, "I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up on wings like eagles, they shall walk and not weary, they shall run and not faint. My grace is sufficient for you, and my strength shall be made perfect in weakness." To the natural man, who understandeth not the things of God, this would very likely appear the unintelligible rant of enthusiasm. But to you who, though once blind, now see, they will appear to be the words of truth and soberness.

VI. Look often into and consider well the perfect law of liberty. Reflect on its purity, extent, spirituality, and high obligation. Remember its precepts; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." While you do so, use the law evangelically. This is its general sum,—I am thy God, therefore thou shalt keep all my commandments. Never attempt obedience to this law in thine own strength, but in that of Jesus. Never do duty in order to obtain life, but as the native result of life received from the fulness of Christ, and to advance the honour of a redeeming God. Never seek peace by your sanctification, but seek sanctification and every other blessing in the God of peace, who sanctifies us, and in the blood of Christ which purges our conscience. Never look on the law as the fountain of strength and acceptance, but always consider it as the standard of duty. Make a constant journey between Christ and the law, looking to him alone for righteousness and acceptance, for light and strength. Travel between the law as a rule, and the promise. Does the law say, "Walk before me and be thou perfect?" The

promise declares, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." Does the law require us to call on the name of the Lord, to worship and serve him? The Gospel promises the spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured out to help our infirmities, and to teach us to pray, praise, and perform every commanded duty. Does the law enjoin us to repent and turn from the evil of our ways? The gospel promises us the heart of flesh, and tells us that God hath sent Christ to bless us "in turning every one of us from our iniquities."

VII. Beware of the hinderances of holiness. Commit the evil heart, in all its lustings, to Him who says, Give me thy heart. Beware of the devices of the wicked one. He sometimes so amazes us, and confounds us with our sinful falls, as to keep us from attempts to rise and go forward. He injects thoughts materially good but unseasonable, and thus interrupts in the discharge of duty. He urges sometimes to many duties that we may neglect all, or, that attempting to discharge them, and finding it impossible, we may be dispirited, and filled with hard thoughts of God as a harsh master. He gilds vices with the appearance of virtues, and urges us to improper compliances, that we may avoid the appearance of hypocrisy. His wiles are numerous and fascinating; and, if unable thus to gain his point, "he goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," endeavouring to alarm those whom he cannot allure. Let us, therefore, "take unto us the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Let us stand, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace: above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Beware of a legal temper, which is naturally strengthened by legal doctrine. This leads us to desire

and expect divine assistance, in working out a justifying righteousness for ourselves ; to hope that, by our holy desires and sincere endeavours, we will induce God to have mercy on us ; to make our faith the ground of our hopes of acceptance ; to depend partly on our own, and partly on our Saviour's righteousness ; to delay believing on Christ till we have acquired certain qualifications, which, we apprehend, are necessary to give us a right to believe *. Legal principles and tempers are natural to us, they are therefore peculiarly to be guarded against. They are highly prejudicial to us, rob us of our peace and joy, check the growth of grace, unfit us for the discharge of duty, and even add fresh vigour to our corrupt principles. In order to counteract the operation of this principle, let us often contemplate our imbecility and unworthiness, and endeavour to get scriptural views of the richness of grace reigning through the atonement. In this way we will be cast into the mould of the Gospel doctrine which has been delivered to us, the true friend and grand promoter of true holiness.

VIII. Shall I add, Never forget the absolute necessity of holiness. Our holiness does not in the slightest degree contribute to our justification, for it is the consequence of it ; but it is absolutely necessary in the justified. Holiness is the life, the vigour, the beauty, the ornament of the soul. It is the evidence of their election ; the proof of their justification ; it justifies the sincerity of their faith before men ; it obtains for them the testimony of their own consciences, and the consciences even of the wicked ; and, what is far better, the approving smile of their reconciled Father. It fits them for present communion with God, and prepares them for his fruition in a better world ; it makes their pilgrimage journey honourable and easy, and its conclusion comfortable or triumphant. The holiness of the saints answers

* This natural, and in some degree or other universal, but most dangerous temper, is well illustrated in two sermons by the Rev. J. Henderson, Dunbar.—*Evangelical Preacher*, Vol. 3.

many good purposes with respect to others. The crimes of men who pretend to believe the doctrines of grace have been highly injurious. The holy temper and conduct of those who really believe it, remove the aspersions which have been cast on them as favourable to licentiousness, and convince every impartial observer, that they are indeed doctrines according to godliness. They strengthen the hands of fellow saints, and powerfully invite strangers to their power, to study their nature, and submit to their influence. "Holiness, (to use the language of an author who is a favourite with almost all who understand him,*) in this life is absolutely necessary to salvation, not only as a mean to an end, but by a nobler kind of necessity, as part of the end itself. Though we are not saved by good works as procuring causes, yet we are saved to good works as fruits and effects of saving grace, which God hath prepared that we should walk in them: Eph. ii. 10. It is indeed part of our salvation, to be delivered from the bondage of the covenant of works; but the end is not, that we may have liberty to sin, but that we may fulfil the royal law of liberty, and that we may serve God, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. Yea, holiness in this life is a necessary part of our salvation; for it is a necessary means of making us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." In one word, my dear friend, in the appropriating faith of Jesus, let us improve every motive to holiness. "Be holy," says our heavenly Father, "for I am holy." The Saviour is "the Holy One of God;" the Spirit is "the Holy Spirit;" the covenant is "the holy covenant;" and the people of Christ are "a holy nation †." That you and I may be "holy as our Father, who is in heaven is holy, and perfect as he is perfect," is the most ardent wish of,

Your friend,

ASPASIO.

* Marshall on Sanctification.

† The reader will find a very luminous account of the blessing and duty of holiness, in that excellent practical treatise, *Booth's Reign of Grace*.

LETTER II.

ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN EVANGELICAL HOLINESS
AND CHRIST.

My Dear Friend,

I have just witnessed one of the most sublime and beautiful appearances of nature ; an appearance which, though far surpassing the most splendid exhibitions of the theatre, and placed within the sphere of general observation, has never drawn the attention of the great bulk of mankind ; an appearance which, though I have witnessed it a thousand and a thousand times, never fails to excite the rapturous sensations of admiration and delight. You will scarcely conjecture that I allude to the rising of the sun. A tempest, seldom equalled at this season of the year, shut up the evening, and during the greater part of the night prevailed with unabated fury. Grateful for shelter from the inclemency of the weather, and committing the endangered mariners and the houseless wanderers, together with the precious fruits of the earth, to the care of Him who is merciful amid his most terrific dispensations, I laid me down and slept, and awaked, for he made me to dwell in safety. When I arose, the storm of night was over, and gone. The black clouds which doubled its terrors are dispersed. "The meek ey'd morn" appeared, and opened to my view the twilight beauties of nature. The light increased by imperceptible gradations, till "the kindling azure and the mountain brow tinged with fluid gold, betokened the glad approach of the powerful king of day.

"And now apparent all,
Aslant the dew, bright earth, and colour'd airs,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad,
And sheds the shining day."

The blades of grass, and the blossoms of the flowers heavy with the drops of night, glitter in his beam. They seem to rejoice in his light, to implore his bounty, and

send up a grateful hymn to the kind Parent of the universe. It was, to use the inimitable language of the inspired poet, the sun rising in "a morning without clouds, when the tender grass springeth out of the earth, by a clear shining after rain." How immensely numerous and important are the purposes which this radiant orb serves in our earth, in the planetary system of which it is the centre, and probably in that wondrous universal system, of which it, with its surrounding worlds, forms but an inconsiderable part. All that the sun is, in the natural world, is Jesus the sun of righteousness in the moral. From him, as from a source, all spiritual blessings flow; to him, as a centre, all holy affections tend. The Scriptures, which are still a surer guide in explaining the appearances of the spiritual world, than our great Newton's *Principia* in tracing the movements of the celestial bodies, always represent spiritual blessings as connected with Christ Jesus. Are we justified? We are justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Are we effectually called? We are the called in Christ Jesus. Are we adopted? We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Are we preserved? We are preserved in Christ Jesus. Are we saved? We are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. As the law of gravitation seems to pervade all nature, so this connection with Christ is to be traced through the whole world of spiritual blessing.

This remark holds particularly respecting that great blessing which is the principal theme of our present correspondence, Evangelical Holiness. Sanctification, both as a privilege and a duty, is closely connected with Christ. "Created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and Christ of God made unto us sanctification," are the language in which the inspired writers speak of this invaluable blessing. Our views of this blessing must always be confused and inaccurate, till we in some measure understand this connection. Let us therefore, my dear friend, with holy curiosity and reli-

gious fear, "look unto this great mystery of godliness,"—Christ to us sanctification, made of God to us sanctification *.

Christ was made *holy*. In his humanity a perfectly holy nature was formed, and his mediation is the source of holiness to millions unnumbered of the race of man. In him human nature was replanted "a choice vine, wholly a right seed," that never could become "the degenerate plant of a strange vine." The root was holy, that so also might be the branches. Most wonderful work of God! Sacrifice and offering for sin God did not desire, but a body, a holy, human nature, was prepared for him. The branch which sprung from Jesse's root was excellent and comely. The child of the virgin was immaculately pure. The nature he assumed was such as it is an object to make those for whom he became incarnate. The holy Spirit of the Lord rested on, and adorned his mind with all the beauties of holiness.

But the Saviour was not only made holy—he was made, and made to us *sanctification*. His obedience and death, or his surety righteousness, removed the obstacles in the way of sinners becoming holy, and secured that they should become holy. By this the curse of the law was removed, and thus one great obstruction to the sanctification of men taken away. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith;" Gal. iii. 13, 14. All that is penal in

* "Christ is my sanctification," says the late pious Mr Romaine in a letter to a friend, "before I can do any thing aright, and what I do aright does not make me holy, but shews that I am holy. Every living branch is ingrafted into the root and stock of holiness, and its leaves and fruit do not make it the vine, but only prove that it is it. My dear friend, weigh these things well. I verily believe the Holy Spirit is now teaching you this lesson: for I see you cannot be content with yourself, nor your graces, nor your gifts; improve this divine teaching, and learn to build all your hopes of holiness on Christ made of God to you sanctification; and the more clearly you believe, you will love the God of your salvation more; your spiritual enemies will be more subdued, and in heart and life you will be more devoted to God, to his ways and will. I give you this advice from my own knowledge."—*Romaine's Letters*.

affliction is destroyed, and nothing is left for them who are under the law to Christ, but wholesome chastisements for their profit, that they may be made partakers of the divine holiness. By this atonement the favour of God is irrevocably secured, and an honourable method prepared for its manifestation. Becoming thus the God of peace Jehovah must be the Lord our God. Loving us, he will manifest his love by bestowing upon us his best benefits; and what benefit more important than sanctification in the whole man, soul, body, and spirit? Every excellence of his nature must concur to sanctify reconciled men; Wisdom must devise and manage our deliverance from temptation. 2 Pet. ii. 9. Power must subdue our iniquities, be perfected in our weakness, and work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Holiness must transform us from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. Justice must bestow upon us the purchased benefit of holiness of heart, and life. Goodness must make us good, and enable us to do good. Truth must accomplish every promise ratified in the blood of the Redeemer, till we be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

By this obedience, and, by these sufferings, our Redeemer procured divine influence to make us holy. "Christ loved his church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word." Eph. v. 25, 26. All that divine influence by which the understanding is enlightened, the will renewed, the affections spiritualized, the conscience purified and pacified, in one word, the soul sanctified, all the graces which form the life into the image of God's sons, are the price of blood. By the Redeemer's atonement, that communion with God, which is the source of true holiness, was procured. The sanctification of his people forms an important subject of those intercessions which are all-prevalent, through the perfection of his atonement. "Sanctify them through thy truth," says the Son of God, and, well pleased for his righteousness sake, the Father hears him always.

In the atonement of Christ, the most powerful motives to holiness have their origin. The horrid nature of sin, as rebellion against the supreme authority, an attempted murder of God, and a real murder of his Son, is displayed in colours more awful than all the horrors of everlasting destruction. While alarmed at sin by this discovery, we are sweetly won to holiness by the display given of redeeming love; and greatly encouraged by the absolute certainty which is thus obtained of gracious assistance and glorious reward.

Christ is sanctification to us, as he is the depositary of all that sanctifying influence which makes us holy. The incarnate word was "full of grace and truth;" and "of his fulness," says the beloved disciple, "have all we received, and grace for grace." He is "a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." As a part of his mediatorial reward, he has all "power in himself that he may give eternal life," of which holiness is an essential part, "to as many as the Father hath given him." He is, as it were, the great storehouse of sanctifying grace. The juice which covers the branches of the vine with buds and leaves, blossoms and fruit, is elaborated in the root and stock, and from them dispersed into the extremities of the tree; so the graces which renew and sanctify our nature, are all derived from Christ Jesus. In him is the light which illuminates our darkened minds, and makes us wise unto salvation. "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." In him is that grace which subdues the evil heart of unbelief, and makes men "strong in faith, giving glory to God." It is "the faith which is in Christ." In him is the grace which melts our hard and stony hearts into evangelical penitence. "He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel." The grace that subdues corrupt principles is in him. "Ye that are Christ's have crucified the flesh in its affections and lusts." In him is the grace which quickens and invigorates. "Be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus." All the qualifications which our common favourite, Marshall, so justly repre-

sents as essentially necessary in order to true holiness, are to be found in Christ. An inward inclination to holiness ; a persuasion of our reconciliation with God, through the imputed righteousness of Christ ; a well grounded hope of eternal life, and cordial trust that God will, by his grace, enable us to perform our duty in an acceptable manner ; that grace, which is necessary to furnish all these, is to be found in the fulness of Christ. Blessed fulness ! how large ! how free ! how near ! how sure ! All necessary grace laid up in the hands of our Brother, (who cannot, like our first father, lose the precious deposit,) to be communicated freely to the most undeserving of his brethren. Why should the Redeemer possess all this power, but to exercise it ? Why is he entrusted with all this grace, but to impart it ? If he is faithful to Him who has appointed him, and who dare charge him with unfaithfulness ? he must bestow the grace upon men,—himself and the holy angels have no need of it. Christ is sanctification, as the design of all his mediatorial offices, and the necessary consequence of their discharge is the production of holiness in the hearts and lives of men. There is no possibility of our having communion with him in any of them, without our being made holy. If he is our Mediator, it is that he may slay our enmity against God, and make us love him with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. If he is our Prophet, it is that he may teach us to “ deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the world.” If he is our Priest, it is that he may “ sanctify the people with his own blood ;” by his sacrifice “ to finish transgression and make an end of sin ;” by his intercession to pray that his people may be sanctified through the truth. If he is our King, it is that he may appoint ordinances as external means of holiness, and, by the influence of his Spirit, render them effectual ; for this purpose give us a holy law, write it on our hearts, and enable us to transcribe it in our lives, dispense gracious rewards and chastisements to encourage

us in duty, and purify us from our sin; defend us from all our spiritual enemies, who would keep us unholy, or make us more and more unholy; and at last delivering us completely from their influence, make us "holy as he is holy, and perfect as he is perfect." If he is a Father, it is that he may beget us again into his own holy image in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; that he may provide us with food, that we may be strong for the discharge of duty, and may increase with the increase of God, and that he may clothe us with that raiment of needlework, imparted holiness. If he is our shepherd, it is that he may distinguish the sheep of his care by the mark of external sanctity, that he may heal their spiritual diseases, and that he may lead them in the paths of righteousness.

But we have not yet seen the full force of that wonderful expression,—Christ is made to us sanctification,—He is the grand agent of sanctification in its commencement, its progress, and its consummation. He effects it by his blood and spirit. The interesting a sinner in the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer, takes away the irritating power of the divine law, that great hinderance of true holiness. "For," says the Apostle, "when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death; but now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." The atonement of Christ also removes the filth of sin, or that in sin which renders the sinner loathsome and abominable in the eyes of infinite purity. It is, as it were, a perfect covering for all defects, a cleansing fountain, which removes all impurities. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sins.

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains;

The dying thief rejoic'd to see
That fountain, in his day,
And there may I, as vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

By his atonement also, as I have repeatedly observed, Christ secured the co-operation of all the attributes of divinity, in making men holy. It is he who is the author of spiritual life. "I am crucified with Christ," says the apostle Paul, "nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." As he first quickens our dead souls, so he preserves us in life. In the emphatic language of scripture, he is "our life." He "works in us both to will and to do in every good work." "Not I," says an apostle, "but the grace of God which was in me." He subdues our corrupt propensities, and makes us serve God in newness of life. He renders the dispensations of Providence conducive to the great end, the sanctification of his people. He removes the object or influence which would hinder us from a good action. He impresses our minds with those scriptural commands and encouragements which are particularly calculated to urge us to its performance, by presenting before our mental eye his new covenant character; he fixes our affections more strongly on him, and renders us willing and anxious to do whatsoever is well pleasing in his sight. By means of an appropriating faith of Christ, as the Lord our righteousness and strength, of which faith he is the author, we gradually increase in holiness, till we come to the measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus. In these sanctifying operations, mediate and immediate, external and internal, Jesus may say, Is not my hand in all these things?

In fine, my friend, Christ is made to us sanctification, for all right motives to holiness are to be found in Christ. It is most true, that if we keep Jesus constantly in view in the

character which he sustains in the great economy of man's redemption, we will not see the necessity of holiness in order to procure the pardon of sin and a title to heaven ; " for we thus judge, that if one died, then were all dead," dead in law, and dead in sin ; and we also thus reason that, seeing his name is Jesus a Saviour, in him we shall have both grace and glory. But, while those motives which, to men who are unacquainted with the gospel, appear the most powerful, are wholly set aside, motives of most commanding and alluring influence are brought forward, and all these are derived from Christ Jesus. Does authority awe the soul ? As for our Redeemer, " the Lord of Hosts is his name, and the God of all the earth shall he be called." Does love animate to action ? Surely " the love of Christ constraineth us to live not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us, and who rose again." " We knew the love of our Lord Jesus, who, although he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich." The glory of his person as Emanuel is a powerful recommendation of holiness to all who know him. With him before our minds, we feel the full force of these words, " Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." His obedience, who is himself the great lawgiver, and the highest possible subject of a law, evidently demonstrates to us the indispensable obligation, and beautifully exemplifies the perfect purity, of the law as a rule of life. Seeing Christ has fulfilled the law, it must be " holy, just, and good." Slavish fear, every Christian knows, remarkably enervates the soul ; while, on the other hand, a joyful hope is a vigorous spring of action, even in very difficult circumstances. How are the former to be dissipated, and how is the latter to be raised ? The answer is easy ; by the trusting in Christ, or by the appropriating reception of him and his salvation, as exhibited in the Gospel. By Jesus are we " delivered from the hands of our enemies, that we may serve God without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life."

“ There is no condemnation to us who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.” “ By *him* we have access into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Need I say, “ every man who hath this hope in him purifies himself even as God is pure?” Motives of a different kind may produce an external and partial obedience, which we may impose on others, and perhaps on ourselves for true holiness, but which is never acceptable to God, and will ultimately cover us with shame and confusion; but let the heart be but properly affected with these truly Christian motives, and the obedience will be sincere, cheerful, and universal. “ Then shall we not be ashamed, having a respect to all God’s commandments.” Would we be constrained to delight ourselves in God? It is the sum of the first table of the law “ to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and mind.” But, though he is infinitely glorious in himself, it is only in Christ that he can appear amiable to sinful men. “ We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement.” Do we wish to feel and display proper affection towards our fellow-men? This is the sum of the duty required in the second table of the law: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” The kindness of Christ is the all-powerful motive. “ Walk in love, as Christ also loved us.” “ Be ye kind one to another, forbearing one another in love, and forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.” So closely connected is true evangelical holiness with Christ; how impossible then to be holy without him, how impossible to be unholy *in him*.

And let us bless God, my dear Theron, that this is not merely a pleasing speculation. We are entitled, we are bound to seek for and to expect holiness in this way, for Christ is made *to us*, made *of God* to us sanctification. He was appointed from eternity to be our sanctification. “ I was,” says he, in the character of the personal wisdom and word of God, “ I was set up from everlast-

ing, in the beginning, ere ever the earth was." By an eternal designation, God set him apart, gave him a commission and authority to be the sanctification of sinful men. He also *prepared* him as our sanctification. "Behold," says he by the Prophet Zechariah, "behold I bring forth my servant the Branch;" Zech. iii. 8. God gave him a holy human nature, endowed him with the Holy Spirit above measure, and constituted him, officially, the sanctification of sinful men. It is scarcely necessary for me to put you in mind of a truth so fully discussed in the course of our conversation, as the free *offer and gift* of Christ in the gospel to sinful unholy men. It shall suffice to quote a few passages of Scripture on this interesting subject, which I believe will be to you quite satisfactory. "I the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house;" Isa. xlii. 6, 7. "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life;" John iii. 16. To all who hear the Gospel he is freely offered and given. And they are not merely warranted, but they are bound to receive him. To them who believe, however, Jesus is not only *granted* as sanctification, but he is actually *bestowed* on them in this character. "No man can come unto me," says the Saviour, "except the Father, who sent me, draw him." In the moment of love, God makes elect sinners see the excellency and suitableness of Jesus as their sanctification, and their right and duty thus to receive him, grounded on the full and free gospel offers addressed to them as individuals, removes their disinclination to him, fixes their affection on him, and thus sweetly constrains and powerfully enables them to embrace him as their sanctification.

Let us then, my dear Theron, endeavour to apply these precious truths to our own experience. They

will enable us to discover whether our holiness be genuine in its nature. Do we derive all our holiness from Christ? Is he the substance and the sum, the all in all of it? Indeed an evil heart of unbelief does turn the best too frequently aside from this way, both in affection and practice; yet is our earnest desire, our habitual endeavour, to approve of and use Christ as the divine ordinance for sanctification? If we are able to answer these questions in the affirmative, we may rest assured our holiness is genuine in its nature. What a rich source of consolation is this! Our holiness is far from being perfect; sin always exists, and often rages in us, but it can never rule. The divine seed cannot perish; we cannot cease to be holy; we cannot but persevere in holiness, for Christ is made of God to us sanctification. Our dependence is not on grace in ourselves, but on grace in Christ. Amid all our weakness we are complete in him. What an encouragement to holy exertion, not to indolent inaction! The Lord who is in us is mighty. Let us be strong, and let not our hands be weak. May we not, my dear friend, (I am sure your Aspasio may) find these doctrines profitable for reproof? How often have we made use of something different from, something separate from, Christ for sanctification. Have we not too often rested on our natural endowments, or our acquired habits, on the means of sanctification, on purposes and resolutions, on vows and engagements and endeavours, on the good name of our minds, and on the renewed nature within us; and looked to these for that holiness which is to be found only in Christ? To expect from these what can be obtained only from the Saviour, is very needless and foolish. Christ is infinitely fitter for this purpose than any, than all of these: he is our sanctification, and made of God to us sanctification. It is highly sinful, for it is directly to oppose God's appointment, and to place something else in the room of the Saviour. It is ungrateful, for it is to refuse the Redeemer the hon-

our which is justly his due, and to treat with contempt one of the most precious of his benefits.

Upon the whole, my friend, the exhortation which naturally arises from this passage on which I have insisted so long, speaketh unto us as children ; its language is, Improve Christ Jesus for sanctification. I trust we have a new nature, but surely this new nature is not independent ; it has no sources of preservation and vigour within itself. Every day brings new duties and difficulties, for which we cannot prepare ourselves. Let us, for their proper discharge, as sinful creatures, assuredly rest on Christ as given to us in the gospel. To excite us to this great radical duty, we should consider that there is no other effectual way of being sanctified but this. Of all other methods of sanctification, we may justly say they are physicians of no value. This is the testimony of the Spirit, who is truth, respecting our Lord Jesus. "Neither is there salvation" (and holiness constitutes an essential part of salvation) "in any other, for there is no name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus." Let us often contemplate the excellence of this way of sanctification. In all the characters which Jesus sustains in order to our sanctification, he is pre-eminently great and glorious. Is he a king ? he is the prince of the kings of the earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Is he a shepherd ? he is the chief shepherd. Is he a fountain ? he is the fountain of gardens, a well of ever-living waters. His power to sanctify is infinite. He is all mighty to save ; and if to save, to sanctify to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. Were all the depravity of earth and hell centred in our hearts, by his blood and spirit they might be so washed and sanctified as to be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Nor is he less able than willing to sanctify ; "him that comes to him he will in nowise cast out." His willingness is attested by stronger evidence than the strongest language. For their sakes he sanctified himself, or devoted himself

to suffering, that they may be sanctified through the truth. He has sanctified some of the unholyest of men, and he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

In fine, my friend, let us consider that we have a full and clear warrant; nay, that it is our undoubted duty, as well as our high privilege, to receive Christ Jesus as our sanctification. He is made sanctification officially to the whole human race. "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world,"—a Saviour whose name is Jesus, because he delivers his people from their sin. A Redeeming God freely offers Christ as sanctification to sinful men, and calls us to receive him. "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price."—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Our Redeemer offers himself to us. "If any man thirst let him come to me and drink." But we are not only invited, but commanded to receive Jesus as our sanctification. This is his commandment, which, as reasonable creatures, we are bound to obey; his fundamental comprehensive commandment, that we believe on the name of the Son of God for sanctification, as well as for every other part of salvation. Now, my dear friend, never will our hearts be pure, our conduct holy; never will our lives be acceptable to our God, honourable to our Redeemer, useful to others, and comfortable to ourselves, till we learn the Apostle's secret, to live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. Would you see these principles exemplified? I will gratify you, by transcribing a short passage from the memoirs of that eminent saint, as well as accurate theologian, Mr Boston. "I think I never had a more solid and serious sense of the absolute need of Christ for sanctification than this day. I saw it was as easy for a rock to raise itself, as for me to raise my heart from sin to holiness. I solemnly laid over on the Lord Jesus all my sins which I knew,

and all which I knew not, that his obedience, death, and sufferings, may bear the weight of them for ever. Taking Christ himself for my head and husband, renouncing my own wisdom, and taking him as my prophet, to learn of him and receive from him the light of life, renouncing my own righteousness, and laying the whole stress of my soul on his merits and righteousness, and taking him for my intercessor and advocate, renouncing all my idols, and taking him for my king and head of influence for sanctification to my soul, resolving, in his strength henceforth, to hang on him for sanctification. Personal holiness was the great thing in my view*." I conclude with a sentiment of that prince of divines, *Dr Owen*. "I can and do commend moral virtues as much as any man ought to do, and I am sure there is no grace where they are not; yet, to make any thing our holiness which is not derived from Jesus Christ, I know not what I do more abhor. An imagination hereof dethrones Christ from his glory, and overthrows the whole gospel." The hour admonishes me to close this epistle, for the pleasing subject has kept your regular friend an hour later from his bed than usual. Farewell, my dearest Theron, yours, in the best bonds of Christian love.

ASPASIO.

LETTER III.

ON THE NATURE OF HOLINESS.

My Dear Friend,

YOUR letter which I have just received, has awakened in me sentiments of the sincerest satisfaction. To find one whose judgment we respect coinciding with us in opinions which we think important, is always agreeable. I deceive myself, however, if this circumstance is the only, or the principal cause of my pleasure. Fully persuaded, that by the truths which formed the principal subject of my letters, men live, and that in them is the

* Boston's Memoirs.

life of my soul, I rejoiced chiefly, not in the support which even Theron's acquiescence gave to my favourite opinions, but in the sure foundation which is laid for my friend's present peace and holiness, and future perfection and felicity, in his cordial reception of the truth as it is in Jesus. I have no doubt that the divine teacher, the Holy Spirit, will lead you into the knowledge of all truth, on every subject connected with your spiritual and eternal interests, and shall be most happy if I may be honoured as one of His instruments in this good work, while endeavouring to comply with your request—to define somewhat more fully the *nature* of true holiness,* and in offering a few advices as to the best method of growing in holiness. There is one remark, which, though it has been made before, I think it of importance to repeat here, that vital union with Christ Jesus is the foundation of true holiness. There may be tempers and actions without this materially good—a form of godliness; yet these do not flow from any supernatural origin, and are not directed to the high end of genuine sanctity. All real holiness is the effect of the soul's union with the blessed Jesus, the first and immediate receptacle of the sanctifying Spirit, out of whose fulness his members, in virtue of their union with him, receive sanctifying influences. How is it possible indeed that there should be true sanctification without Christ? Can there be true holiness without our partaking of the spirit of holiness? Can we partake of that spirit, but through Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life? The falling dew will as soon make its way through the flinty rock, as the influences of grace come from God to sinners, in any other way but through him whom the Father hath constituted the

* The reader will find much accurate discussion on this subject in Frazer's *Scriptural Doctrine of Sanctification*, being an illustration of Rom. vi. vii. and viii. The discourses at the end merit particular attention. A commentary on the whole Epistle of the Romans on a similar plan, is a *desideratum*. The person who shall supply the want, will do good service to the Church of Christ.

Head of influences. Sanctification is a body, of which the Redeemer is the soul. "The life which I live in the flesh," says the apostle, "I live by the faith of the Son of God. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." True holiness is originally produced; it is increased, and it is perfected, by the application of his righteousness and the communication of his Spirit. Keeping this remark constantly in view, let us somewhat more particularly attend to the nature of sanctification.

The term sanctification is used in Scripture, in reference to the people of God, with considerable latitude and distinction of meaning. They are said to be sanctified, *inasmuch as they are separated from the rest of mankind*. Whatever was set apart and devoted to the divine service, is in scripture represented as sanctified. We must understand in this way the sanctification of times, vessels, &c. and our Lord's self-sanctification spoken of in John xvii. 19. In this sense the people of God are sanctified: "The Lord hath set apart the godly man for himself." They were thus sanctified, or set apart in the divine decree, when they were "chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth;" in the Redeemer's purchase, when they were "redeemed, not by such corruptible things as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, from their vain conversation, received by tradition from their fathers;" in the day of effectual calling, when they were called out from the world lying in wickedness, and became separate; and by their own voluntary consent, when they said, "I am the Lord's, and subscribed with their hand unto the Lord, and sur-named themselves by the name of Israel."

The people of God are also said to be sanctified, *inasmuch as they are purified from the pollution of sin*. The promise is fulfilled with respect to them, "I will sprinkle clear water upon you, and ye shall be clean;" and, like our Lord's primitive disciples, they are "clean through the

word which Christ hath spoken to them." This purification is commenced in regeneration. "Men are saved by regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." It is carried on by means of faith in Christ, as our righteousness and sanctification; "their hearts are purified by faith." As at each successive immersion into Jordan, Naaman's leprosy became less and less discernible, till it disappeared; so by each successive act of faith on Christ Jesus, the defilement of sin becomes more and more effaced, till at length the saint is presented without spot, and blameless. While here below, spots, foul spots, remain on the best; but with the mortal body, they shall put off also the body of sin and death. They shall become "holy as God is holy, and pure as he is pure." But saints are also sanctified, inasmuch as they are made positively holy. They are made "partakers of a divine nature;" they are "renewed after the image of God;" they become "new creatures:" Not only do "old things pass away, but all things become new." As the priests on their consecration not merely washed themselves, but put on their pure and splendid sacerdotal robes; so the saint not merely is purified from the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, but he becomes all glorious within, with a holy temper, and is externally adorned by the beauties of a blameless and holy life. Like Joshua the high priest, in Zechariah's vision, "he is not merely stripped of his filthy garments, but a fair mitre is set upon his head, and he is clothed with change of raiment;" Zech. iii. 4, 5.

The principle of holiness or spiritual life implanted in the soul by the spirit of Christ, receives different designations, according to its various modes of acting. When the man under its influence receives into his understanding the revealed will of God, it is termed *knowledge*: When he believes on the divine promise, and depends on God and Christ as there revealed, it is termed *faith*: When he esteems and delights in a redeeming God, and

desires fellowship with him, and the enjoyment of him, it is termed *love*: When he grieves for sin, whereby he has offended God, it is termed *repentance*: When he stands in awe of God, and refrains from every known violation of his law, it is termed *fear*: When he expects good from the hand of God, for time and for eternity, it is called *hope*: When, under injuries, his temper is quiet and his mind composed, it is termed *meekness*: When he endeavours to comply with all the will of God, it is termed *obedience* and *resignation*. Thus we see that what are termed the graces of the spirit, the constituent parts of true holiness, are not so much different principles, as the one principle of holiness manifesting itself variously, according to the varied circumstances of the person in whom it dwells, and on whom it operates.

This view of sanctification illustrates an observation which I have often made to you, that there is an *essential* difference between real holiness and a profession of religion, or even an external reformation of manners, a difference just as wide as there is between an appearance and reality; between that picture of the sun which adorns the wall of my library, and the glorious orb who, from his meridian altitude, is now pouring a flood of light and glory on the world.

Sanctification, in the sense now explained, may be considered in reference either to the internal principles or the external conduct. Divines have termed it, in the first case, sanctification of nature, and in the second, sanctification of life. With respect to the first of these, *sanctification of nature*, we may remark, that, in consequence of union and fellowship with Christ, a holy vital principle, resembling the instinctive principle, in the regularity, constancy, and uniformity of its operation, is communicated by the Divine Spirit. This principle is produced in regeneration, and gradually increases in strength, till it destroys every opposing propensity, and rules without a rival over the faculties of the mind and

the members of the body. This principle at once enables us and disposes us to do holy actions, deriving all its power from its author, the Spirit of Christ, or rather being but another name for his operations on the sanctified soul.

The whole of the faculties of the mind, and the whole of the affections of the heart, are influenced by it. Considered as influencing the understanding, it is a power and disposition to think and judge, to believe and esteem, to inquire and reason aright about spiritual things. Viewed as affecting the conscience, it is a power and disposition to rely on Jesus' righteousness as the means of removing both the condemning and depraving power of sin; a reverential regard to God and his law, and a deep abhorrence of all wickedness, even the most refined, useful, and formerly beloved. Considered as influencing the will and affections, it is a disposition and capacity of choosing, loving, and delighting in God in Christ, as our portion, and in every thing good, in proportion to the intimacy of its connexion with him; an ability and readiness to yield to God's revealed will, and to hate, be grieved with, and flee from every thing displeasing to him. Viewed as affecting the memory, it is a power and disposition of forgetting trifles and wickedness, and of retaining impressions of the word and of the works of God, in proportion to their importance. Considered, in fine, as influencing the body, it is a readiness to be instrumental in righteousness, and an indisposition to employ any of our members in the service of Sin or Satan.

Sanctification of life consists in the exertion of this principle in our lives, leading us to do what God has required, and abstaining from what God has forbidden. The promise is, "I will put my spirit within you, and ye shall walk in my statutes and keep my judgments, and do them." It includes in it the living to God in the discharge of those duties which have him for their immediate object; both of those inward duties which have no

outward expression, such as serious consideration, faith, reverence, patience, &c. and of those outward duties of prayer, searching the scriptures, and the living to God in those duties which have not him for their immediate object, such as justice, benevolence, humanity, and relative duties. A sanctified person is not only a devout person, but he endeavours in every relation to act according to God's will. He is a good master, a good parent, a good child, a good neighbour; endeavouring to render to all their due, and to do to others as he would that they should to him. It includes in it an habitual conviction of the guilt, malignity, and danger of sin, of all sin, of every sin, especially the sin to which, from constitution, habit, or interest, we are most inclined; earnestly desiring complete deliverance from it, using every method for this purpose, avoiding whatever may lead to sin, and scrupulously abstaining from whatever is known to be forbidden in the divine law.

This sanctification both of principles and practice, gradually and progressively increases in its degree. They who have pure hands wax stronger and stronger; they go from strength to strength. The saint goes through the various stages of infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood, in holiness; the feeble plant gradually acquires new size, and strength, and beauty, till, transplanted to the paradise of God, it becomes a tree of righteousness, whose leaf never withers, and whose fruit never fails.

Having thus directed your attention to the nature of true holiness, and considered it as influencing both the internal principles and the external conduct, let me now attempt to fix your mind for a little on some of its distinguishing qualities. The holiness of which I speak is real. He in whom it dwells is no hypocrite; he has truth in his inward parts; he is an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile; he does not regard iniquity in his heart; his prayer is "Draw out my desires towards thee; let my heart be found in thy statutes:" Remembering that God

always sees him, he abhors every wicked way, and endeavours to practise every duty.

This holiness is *scriptural*. This is one of its characteristic qualities. Nothing but true holiness has this character. Bring counterfeit holiness to the touchstone of the Scriptures, and its spurious nature is soon discovered. But this answers the description of holiness contained in the Scriptures ; its rule and pattern are to be found there ; it is by Scripture, as an instrument, that it is produced ; the doctrines, promises, laws, threatenings, &c. of Scripture, are the means of its being formed and strengthened. “ Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” The more clear our conceptions, and the firmer our faith of the doctrines of the Gospel, the more abundantly will we yield the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus to the glory and praise of God. Wherever the Gospel comes with efficacy it brings forth fruit, and the divine nature, of which saints are made partakers, is communicated by means of the exceeding great and precious promises. They are cast into the mould of Gospel doctrine, Rom. vi. 17.

This holiness is, farther, *extensive*, and indeed *universal*. It influences all the faculties of the mind, all the affections of the heart, all the actions of the life : “ He that sitteth on the throne saith, Behold I make all things new.” It includes in it all kinds of duties, religious and moral, personal and relative, public and private. It is bounded only by the capacities of human nature and the injunctions of the divine law, and influences its possessor at all times and in all companies.

This holiness is *evangelical*. Legal holiness rests on the foundation of personal righteousness and inherent strength ; such was Adam’s holiness in a state of innocence. But evangelical holiness is built on the much securer foundation of the righteousness and grace of an incarnate God. “ Surely in the Lord,” says the saint,

“surely in the Lord shall one say, I have righteousness and strength.” He performs holy duties in a dependance on Jesus’ strength, and looks for the acceptance of these duties (imperfect at best) only through Jesus’ atonement and intercession. Legal holiness flows from fear of hell, and he who has nothing else, acts reluctantly : Evangelical holiness flows from love, and he who possesses it, runs cheerfully in the way of God’s commandments. The man whose holiness is legal, expects that God will accept him for his endeavours to do his duty : The man whose holiness is evangelical, accepts all blessings as to him free unmerited favours, though dearly bought by the obedience, and sufferings, and death of his surety. The former in his duties seeks himself—his own interest—the latter keeps steadily in view, as his ultimate object, the illustration of the excellencies of a redeeming God.

Finally, this holiness is *permanent*. The apparent holiness of the hypocrite is but of temporary duration ; it is like the morning cloud and the early dew which go away. Even such as seemed clean escaped from the corruption of the world, have returned like the dog to her vomit, and like the sow who was washed to his wallowing in the mire. But he who is truly holy, grows in grace—forgetting the things which are behind, he reaches forward to that which is before, and presses on till he reach the mark—obtain the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He that hath begun the good work carries it on till the day of the Lord.

Self-examination is a most important, and seldom an unseasonable duty. Let you and I then seize the opportunity which these remarks offer of inquiring into the nature of that holiness which we possess. Does our holiness originate in deliverance from the law as a covenant ? Are we become “ dead to the law through the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth

fruit unto God?" Rom. vii. 4. Are we, "through the law, dead to the law that we might live unto God?" We must renounce the law as a rule of acceptance, before we can improve it as a rule of obedience.—We must die to it as to the hope of salvation through it, ere we can live according to it as the directory of conduct? Does our holiness originate in union with Christ Jesus as our head of righteousness, and source of sanctifying influence? Is our Maker our husband—have we believed his gracious declarations? "I will say to them who were not my people, Ye are my people; and they shall say, The Lord is our God—I will betrothe thee unto me for ever." Have we listened to and obeyed his gracious invitations? "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest." Have we said in reply to them, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength!" What think we of Christ our sanctification? Is he in our estimation, as well as in reality, "white and ruddy;" "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely?" Does our holiness originate in faith in Christ? Has God purified our hearts by faith? Do we confide in Jehovah's word, and in his perfections, righteousness, and grace, exhibited as the objects of confidence to us as sinful creatures? What evidences have we that we are possessed of that holiness which we have been describing? Do we love God because he is holy? Can we not only rejoice in his goodness, but give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness? Do we love the people of God because of their holiness? Are they the excellent ones of the earth? Is our delight in them? And do "we know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren?" Do we love the word of God because it is holy? Can we with David appeal to God, and say, "Thy word is most pure, therefore thy servant loveth it." Do we love the means of holiness, particularly the public institutions of religion? Can we say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord God of Hosts! My soul

fainteth ; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." Are even afflictions precious to us, as the means of purity ? Do we willingly suffer chastisement, when we remember that the design of it is that we may be made partakers of the divine holiness—that " by all these shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged ; and that the fruit of all is to take away his sin ?" Are we anxious to make progress in holiness ? Is the language of our heart, onward, still onward—" not that I have already attained, neither am already perfected, but I follow after that I may apprehend, that for which also I am apprehended of the Lord Jesus ; and, not counting myself to have apprehended, this one thing I do : Forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forward to those which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Do we hate sin ? Are our hearts right with God's heart ? Sin is the abominable thing which God's soul hates. Now, can we truly say that we hate every wicked way ? Do we hate, heartily hate, and carefully avoid sins, which are accounted little, pleasant, or useful ? Are we deeply affected with sorrow and self-aborrence at the remains of sin in ourselves ? Are we disposed to exclaim with Job, " I am vile, what shall I answer thee : I abhor myself ; I repent in dust and in ashes ;"—or with Asaph, " I was ignorant, and like a beast before thee ?" Are we deeply affected with the sins of others ? When we see transgressors, are we grieved ; and do " rivers of water run down our eyes when we see the wicked transgress thy law ?" If we can answer these questions in the affirmative, though our replies may be delivered with a trembling voice, we have reason to hope the great work of sanctification is begun, and will, in due time, be perfected.

Our degrees of grace are much lower, and our corruptions are much more powerful, than we could wish them

to be. But let us not be discouraged: Let us repair to the all-sufficiency of grace in Christ and in his Spirit in the promise: There is all we need for duty and difficulty for the service of time, and the joys of eternity.—Let us also console ourselves with the thought, that if our holiness, though very imperfect, be real, we have been the objects of the everlasting love of God—predestinated from eternal ages, to be conformed to the image of his Son. Can the decree of the Omnipotent be frustrated? If not, we shall be made holy. We are also interested in the death of Jesus, and that farther secures our holiness. The Son of God did not die as a fool dieth; the ends for which he died will assuredly be gained. Now, we know that “he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He gave himself for the church, that he might purify and cleanse it. We are redeemed by his precious blood from the vain conversation received by tradition from our fathers.” With these exceeding great encouragements, why should our hand be slack in the great work of holiness. The more holiness we attain, the more happiness we shall enjoy. “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: And he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father: And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” The more holiness we have, the more lively will be our sense of pardon, the more abundant our spiritual consolations, and the greater our meetness for heaven.

Having endeavoured to comply with your first request in describing the nature of true holiness, I shall attempt to gratify you in your second petition, of laying before you a few directions in addition to those contained in a former letter, as to the best method of improving in Evangelical Holiness.

I. Never imagine that your heart must be changed from sin to holiness in any measure, before you may safely venture to trust in Christ for the sure enjoyment of himself and his salvation. We are naturally disposed to ground our salvation on the foundation of our own works. If we cannot make them procuring conditions and causes of our salvation through Christ, we endeavour to make them necessary preparations to fit us for receiving Christ and his salvation by faith. This error is very pernicious to the practice of holiness. The doctrine of Scripture—I say it without any fear of being confuted, however much I may be contradicted, the doctrine of Scripture on this subject, is, that not the least change of heart or life, from sin to holiness, is necessary in order to make it our right and duty to believe in Christ; and that it is indeed altogether impossible. Christ would have the vilest sinner come immediately to him for salvation. If they wait till they deserve to receive him and his benefits, they will never come at all. Christ calls on us to believe on him that justifieth the ungodly—he cannot require us then to be godly in order to give us a right to believe. He is the physician of souls, who wishes men, in the most dangerous and loathsome stage of the disease of sin, to come directly to him that he may cure them. The vilest sinner but the more needs the Saviour; and though he certainly deserves any thing but his salvation, yet, as the design is to display the richness of Divine grace, he is welcome to receive it. The stout-hearted and far from righteousness are assured, that even to them, God's righteousness is brought near, and that his salvation will not tarry.

II. Seek for holiness of heart and life in the order in which God has appointed it to be sought and bestowed. He is willing to confer salvation on all, but he will confer it only in the appointed way, and its various benefits in their due order and connection. It is a matter of high consequence to be well acquainted with the place which

holiness holds in the Christian salvation, and the order in which God has promised to bestow this benefit upon men ; and it is a proof of Christian wisdom to seek it only in this order. God, in the first instance, unites to Christ as the living vine, and then renders us fruitful in good thoughts, words, and actions. We must first live in the Spirit, before we can walk in the Spirit. This order has many and important advantages—we thus have all that power of motive which arises from the manifestation of the love of God to us, in forgiving our sins, receiving us into favour, giving us the spirit of adoption, and the hope of glory freely through Christ—sweetly and invincibly to urge us to obey all the commandments of our God. We also thus are secured of the Spirit of God, to incline us to, and to strengthen us for obedience.

III. Always remember, that as union with Christ, made of God to us sanctification, is the foundation of renovation of state and nature ; so the continuance of this union, and the fellowship which results from it, is the immediate source of holiness in habit and practice. Hence, we are said to walk in Christ—to be rooted and built up in him—to have Christ living in us—to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might—to have a good conversation in Christ—in other words, Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, as the Lord our righteousness and strength, by his Spirit, as our comforter and sanctifier, bestows, supports, actuates, determines, and strengthens our new nature to every good word and work. Let us beware, then, of acting as if we could lead a life separate from Christ in the strength of our own graces. These are but streams issuing from the fountain of life in Christ, and will quickly dry up, if not constantly fed from their source. Too frequently we seek life among the dead,—we go to ourselves for life, and find only deadness. How much more wisely would we act to have recourse for vivifying influence to Jesus the resurrection and life !

IV. Improve the comforts of religion for promoting holiness. The religion of Jesus is highly comfortable—it exhibits to a sinful creature a redeeming God—as the God of all consolation—the Saviour, as the consolation of Israel—the Spirit, as the spirit of gladness—the blessings of grace, as wells of salvation, from which we may draw water with joy. Realizing these truths by that divine principle which makes future things present, and unseen things visible, and taking them home to ourselves, we are filled with joy and peace, and the joy of the Lord is our strength.

This is not a pleasure which, like many worldly enjoyments, weakens the power of the mind, and disposes it to indolence and inactivity; but, on the contrary, it rouses every latent energy, and urges to strenuous exertion. Under the influence of this joy the Christian feels a supreme desire to glorify that God who appears so glorious in himself, and so kind to him. He sings in the way of the Lord—he runs in the way of God's commandments. When his heart is enlarged with views of the Divine love, he rejoices and gives thanks at the remembrance of God's holiness, manifested in the atonement. Agreeably to this view of the subject, we find, that, in the fifth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, love, joy, and peace, stand foremost in the list of the fruits of the Spirit—afterwards follow, long suffering, gentleness, faith, and meekness.

V. Often contemplate the doctrines of grace—the exhibitions of Christian privilege as a powerful mean of promoting holiness. The doctrines of the Gospel respecting God as glorified in Christ, and of grace reigning through righteousness, have been considered by some as principally to be taught to those who are entirely ignorant of Christianity; and that the great duty of intelligent Christians is to attend to God's law, and endeavour to keep it. In their estimation, the principal, if not the only duty

of a Christian minister is to explain and enforce duty. The Apostles of our Lord were obviously of a different opinion. They largely, and in the first place, explain the doctrines of religion, and then proceed to the enforcement of duty. Nay, the Lord of the Apostles occupied the greater part of his last discourses to his disciples, with explications of the nature and consequences of faith, union with himself, and the sanctifying influences of the Divine Spirit. The doctrine of Christ crucified, in its true extent, is the instituted mean for producing and nourishing the divine life, and will form the grand subject of the sermons of every minister who wishes to promote the holiness of his hearers.

That public instructor, and that private Christian too, who does not view union with Christ as the spring of spiritual life and obedience : who does not habitually advert to the excellence and necessity of the atonement of Jesus, as our only righteousness before God ; who does not perceive that Christ is the only fountain of sanctification, and source of saving influence ; and that it is necessary constantly to rely upon him, by a lively faith, for direction, assistance, and acceptance in duty, though they should have the most just and extensive views of duty, and all the motives which urge to its performance, exclusive of those which are strictly evangelical, will be found to labour in vain, and to spend their strength for nought. Their exertions to make others or themselves holy, are but like the rubbing a dead body, which may produce some degree of external heat, but cannot revive the extinguished spark of life. But a believing consideration of Jesus, in his glory and grace, will purify the heart, and produce real and active holiness.*

* When the doctrines of grace are opposed, or laid aside and concealed, and mere morality fills the room of doctrine, the influence on holiness must be fatal. It is a general complaint, that a degeneracy of manners universally prevails. Now, I may venture to affirm, that moral preaching, so much in vogue, is the cause of this. In fact, we have preached morality so long, that we see hardly any morality left. And how should

VI. As holiness is secured in many great and precious promises, endeavour to plead them in faith, and there will be a performance of them to you in your increased sanctification.

I mention the following particularly, and recommend them to your devout attention: "Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; *he will subdue our iniquities*, and he will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."—"Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace."—"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."—"I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."—"My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."—"I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."—"I will give them a heart to know me that I am the Lord."—"In his name shall the Gentiles trust."—"They shall look on him whom they pierced, and shall mourn."—"I will put my fear in their hearts."—"The Lord will circumcise your heart to love him."—Lay these before the throne of grace, saying, "Do as thou hast said. Remember thy word to thy servant, on which thou caused him to hope."

VII. Exercise an assured appropriating faith, in a manner suited to your state of union with Christ, in order to promote holiness according to it, and not at all ac-

it be otherwise? We have forsaken the Christian doctrine, the fountain of living waters, and hewn out to ourselves cisterns which can hold no water.—*Jones' Visitation Sermon*. For a more convincing proof of the connection of holiness with what are termed Evangelical Doctrines, see Milner's History of the Church of Christ, *passim*.

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cording to your natural state. True holiness is a putting off the old man, and a putting on the new. In this case, we must live under a deep impression of the remaining corruption of our nature and practice; we must never satisfy ourselves with a trusting in Christ's grace, merely to assist our endeavours, but, wholly distrusting our own strength and best meant endeavours, trust in him alone to perform in and for us, every thing necessary for his honour and our happiness; we must never perform any duty in order to obtain God's judicial pardon of our sins, an interest in his favour, or a title to eternal life, but as persons already pardoned, accepted, secured of heaven, and possessed of his Spirit and Gospel comforts; and, in fine, we must never set ourselves to the performance of any duty, by whatever motives we are urged to it, without first of all, by faith, applying Christ and his grace to our souls, and improving those benefits of the new covenant which are peculiarly fitted for urging us to, and encouraging us, in the duty.

VIII. Carefully study the word of God. In the Divine word, read or preached, we have a mirror, in which we may behold the gracious designs of God respecting us; the all-sufficiency and glory of Christ, together with the finished salvation which he has wrought out for the guilty. And beholding, as in a glass, these glories of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. As the countenance of Moses, after his intercourse with Jehovah, shone with such radiance that the Israelites could not steadily behold it, so the believer, viewing Jesus, the King of Glory, in his matchless beauty, derives a likeness to the glorious object of his faith and love. The more frequently he contemplates, the more fully he knows those perfections of which holiness is the great ornament;—the more fully he knows them, the more ardently does he love them;—the more ardently he loves them, the more earnestly does he desire conformity to them. As our holi-

ness consists in the conformity of our heart and life to the will of God revealed in his word, it would be useful to set before ourselves a set of scriptures, as rules for our conduct ; to ponder them frequently ; and, if we cannot walk up to them, to endeavour at least to walk after them. Even this will, through Christ Jesus, be accepted as a demonstration of our love to God. For the regulation of our thoughts, the following passages may be useful : “ Wash thy heart from wickedness ; how long will vain thoughts lodge within thee ? ” Jer. iv. 14. “ Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts ; ” Isaiah lv. 7. “ My meditation of him shall be sweet ; ” Psalm civ. 34. “ Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, of good report, and lovely, think of these things ; ” Phil. iv. 8. “ Let none of you imagine evil things in your heart against his neighbour, for these are the things I hate, saith the Lord ; ” Zech. viii. 17.—For the regulation of our affections : “ Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth ; ” Col. iii. 2. “ They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts ; ” Gal. v. 24. Our delight—“ But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night ; ” Psalm i. 2. “ Delight thyself also in the Lord, and thou shalt get the desire of thy heart ; ” Psalm xxxvii. 4. Our joy—“ Rejoice in the Lord alway ; and again I say, rejoice ; ” Phil. iv. 4. Our desire—“ The desire of our soul is to thy name. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me will I seek thee early ; ” Isaiah xxvii. 8, 9. Our sorrow—“ But they that escape shall be on the mountains, like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity ; ” Ezek. vii. 16. Our love—“ Oh how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day ; ” Psalm cxix. 97. Our hatred—“ O ye that love the Lord, hate evil ; ” Psalm xcvi. 10. Our fear—“ Fear him, who, after he has killed the body, is able to cast into hell ; yea, I say unto thee, fear him ; ” Matth.

x. 28. Our hope—"And now, O Lord, what wait I for, my hope is in thee;" Psalm xxxix. 7. Our trust—"Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;" Isaiah xxvii. 4. For regulating our speech—"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good for the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers;" Eph. iv. 4. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man;" Col. iv. 16. "Let my mouth be filled with thy praise, and with thy honour all the day;" Psalm lxxi. 8. For our conduct—"This is a faithful saying, that they who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works. Put them in mind to be ready to every good work;" Tit. iii. 8, ii. 2. "Well reported of for good works—having diligently followed every good work;" 1 Tim. v. 10.

IX. Improve the proper motives for holiness. You would justly condemn the preacher who would press upon believers motives to holiness, quite inconsistent with their intimate and irrevocable union with Christ, perfect and universal justification through him, and infallible conservation in him—to thunder forth liableness to condemnation against those who have passed from death to life, and cannot come into condemnation—whose life is hid with Christ in God, and who must live because he liveth—to talk to the divinely established and immutably secured heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ, as if they had their title to eternal life, or their claim to its actual possession, to earn by their exertions, is certainly worse than absurd, it is highly criminal. Beware of an evil heart of unbelief and legality, which would lead you to act under the influence of such motives. Having your conscience sprinkled by the blood of Christ, engage in the practice of holiness, under the influence of evangelical motives. For this purpose, consider the offices, relations, works, and fulness, the redeeming love, and the endearing

example of Christ and his Father—the authority of God, as our God and Father—the indwelling and influence of the Holy Spirit in the heart, and our advantages and disadvantages as stated by the covenant of grace. As to the motives arising from the sanction of the law as a rule—its rewards and chastisements, they are necessary to stir us up in our state of minority to our duty, but we must always view them in an evangelical light. We must always remember, that whatever reward here or hereafter is annexed by promise to the holiness of believers in heart or life, is freely bestowed on them, not properly for their work, but because their persons are united to Christ, as the Lord their righteousness, in whom their holiness and comfort connectedly come to them as equally free mercies and privileges. As to afflictions, you must view them always not as a destructive punishment of sin—but as a kind chastisement, a precious blessing to you, purchased by the righteousness of Christ, your surety; and bestowed by God, as your wise, faithful, and loving friend.

X. Never forget that our continued reception of Christ's righteousness and grace by faith is the only and immediate means of all our Gospel holiness, repentance, love, and new obedience. Hence this is said to proceed, not only from a good conscience, but from faith unfeigned. Holiness is called a living by the faith of the Son of God—a walking by faith—the obedience of faith. According to the strength of our faith will be the strength of our other graces, and the progress of our holiness.* Before

* “We are to abide at the well-head of life, by a frequency of the acts of faith upon the person of Christ. Faith is that grace, not only whereby we are implanted into Christ, but whereby we also abide in him. If so, methinks the frequent actings of faith upon the person of Christ, are a drawing near to the well-head of life. And though we are to put forth the vigour of the watchfulness of our hearts unto obedience, yet a ceasing to continue in the actings of faith upon the person of Christ, even under the vigour of our own endeavours, by those several outward desires of walking with God, and living to him, will weaken us, and we shall find ourselves losers by it.”—*Dr Owen*.

I leave this part of the subject, I may observe, that no marks of holiness are to be trusted, but such as may be traced up to a believing of the record which God hath given of his Son, as the depositary and dispenser of eternal life to us sinful men, and to our spiritual union and fellowship with him by faith.

XI. Upon the whole, we should walk by rule. Indeed, to fix and observe a certain method of procedure is of high importance in a life of religion. I hope my friend will begin the day with God. When you awaken in the morning, let *Him* have your first thoughts. Lift up your heart in thankfulness to *Him* for the preservation of the night, and in supplication for his presence with you in the duties of the commencing day. After such ejaculations, before you rise from bed, you will do well to consider what are the duties to which you are called this day—in what manner you may most honour God, do good to others, and promote your own spiritual interests. While rising from bed, and dressing yourself, meditate on subjects suited to the occasion; such as the necessity of your resurrection from spiritual death, the certainty and consequences of the final resurrection at the great day of Christ's appearing, and the necessity of being clothed with the righteousness and grace of Jesus. Engaging in reflection on such subjects, will be found an excellent preparation for the duties which lie before you.

Retire as soon as you conveniently can to your closet; read a portion of God's word, mixing it with faith, giving a close attention, making devout reflections, and occasional aspirations, suited to the nature of the passage perused. After reading, pause a little, and endeavour to affect your mind with lively impressions of the infinite greatness and absolute perfection of the glorious majesty to whom you are about to approach. Lift up your heart to God in earnest desires for the influences of the Divine Spirit to help your infirmities, and enable you to pray as you ought. Thus, in the name of Christ, come before

God with an awful sense of the infinite distance between Him and you, and of your extreme unworthiness of his favour : yet with a humble hope and confidence in his infinite grace, reigning through righteousness. Keep a strict and continual guard over your thoughts and your affections, that they do not wander from the business before you, and render the duty a mere superficial service.

From your closet proceed to the duties of family-worship ; call your whole household together ; let no ordinary excuse for absence be sustained ; sing part of a psalm or hymn ; read a portion of the Holy Scriptures ; and I would advise you generally, to read in a regular order, that the whole of the Sacred Word may be heard by all your domestics. Engage then in solemn prayer ; and, having thus conducted the devotion of the morning, dismiss them to their various secular employments.

Having thus carried yourself and your family through the morning sacrifices, do not suppose that you are discharged from all attention to religious and spiritual concerns till the return of the stated hours of divine worship. Endeavour to preserve and cherish a spiritual frame, intermixing frequent ejaculations with the business in which you are engaged. I would advise you to retire after dinner into your closet, for the purposes of devotion. Imitate David and Daniel in the frequency of your secret retirements ; and make it a rule, if possible, in the evening, in the morning, and at noon, to pray, and let God hear your voice.

Appropriate some time every day for the purpose of religious meditation. In this exercise spend, at least, every day, half an hour. Let the time be stated ; and let no ordinary avocation prevent the regular performance of this duty. Perhaps experience will teach you, with the patriarch Isaac, to choose the evening for this service ; but in this you must be regulated by your own Christian prudence. The whole word of God will afford you matter for meditation. There you have a large field, enough to keep you happily employed

to all eternity. The subjects it offers are almost endless; but the perfections of God, the astonishing work of redemption through Jesus Christ, the excellence of his person, the wonderful benefits of his salvation, the incomparable glories of the heavenly world, your own wants, &c. ought most frequently to engage your attention. Betake yourself to this, and every duty, as in the presence of God; call in your thoughts from every foreign concern; and keep closely fixed; muse deeply, till the fire burns. Meditate on divine and eternal things, till they become real and visible to the eye of the mind.

And now, brought to the close of the day, end it as you began, with respect to the duties both of the family and closet. Before you betake yourself to rest, review the conduct of the day, and consider what matter of repentance and of thanksgiving is thereby before you. Improve also your waking minutes on your bed (whether before you fall asleep, or when you awaken during the night), in religious meditation, that when you awake in the morning you may still be with God.

Besides these daily exercises of religion, I need scarcely say to you, there are seasons wherein the whole day should be taken up in the immediate service of God, excepting when we are called off by the works of necessity and mercy. Such is the Lord's Day, the Christian's Sabbath, which ought to be so strictly sanctified, that we should not so much as allow ourselves to think our own thoughts, or to speak our own words. Such are likewise occasional days of thanksgiving and humiliation. The frequent and devout observation of these days has often proved eminently useful in promoting the life and power of godliness.

To your question, What is the best way of keeping up religion in a hurry of business? I answer, in the words of an eminent Christian, "It is to look on it as a duty of the eighth commandment of our Sovereign Lord, Creator and Redeemer; and so going about it in a compliance with his will, who has allotted to every man his station, and

determined the duties of it—to make application to him ordinarily in your stated addresses to the throne of grace for wisdom to guide your affairs with discretion, and for the success of them, according to his promise thereanent, and actually to go about them in a dependence on the Lord. Thus, while you serve your lawful purposes in the world, you will serve the Lord Christ. From the little experience I have had of the management of worldly things, I can say, there is communion with God to be had in that way of management. Sweet lessons of dependence, experience of the accomplishment of promises, and ever-kind relentings for heart sins, sweeter than the world's sweetest enjoyments." I now bid you adieu, praying that God may bless these remarks, for the increase of your holiness and comfort.—I am, my dear friend, your most affectionate,

ASPASIO.

LETTER IV.

ON THE EXERCISE OF HOLINESS.

My Dear Friend,

AMONG the many reasons I have for gratitude to my Supreme Benefactor, I do not account it the least cogent, that, in appointing the bounds of my habitation, he allotted my station, far from the noise and bustle of cities, in the sequestered vale of rural life. The advantages which we who live in the country enjoy, for making progress in knowledge and piety, are numerous and important. May He who gives us these advantages give us grace to improve them! I have often, with pleasure heard you expatiate on the charms and benefits of rural life. For Theron is, at least, as much an enthusiast on this subject as his friend; but I do not recollect of your

ever having mentioned a circumstance, which has a very powerful influence in endearing the country to me,—I allude to the use of rural scenery and employments in leading us to perceive the meaning and beauty of many passages of Scripture, and their tendency to call up to the mind some of the more pleasing and interesting doctrines of the Gospel. A very large proportion of the figures of Scripture are taken from appearances to which inhabitants of cities are, in a great measure, strangers; from the lofty mountain, the boundless ocean, the mighty river, the almost infinitely diversified appearances of the vegetable and animal tribes; and, of consequence, their meaning can be but partially known, and their beauty must be almost wholly concealed. It is impossible for us to cast our eyes in any direction without meeting with spiritual instruction in the objects which present themselves to our view. Every season of the year, with its appropriate appearances and employments, is, as it were, consecrated by Scriptural application, and, to a devout mind, is replete with important wisdom. Oh how happy would it be for us, if we had but the art to improve to the utmost this peculiar advantage!

I dare say my friend begins to think I have forgotten the earnest request with which his last letter concluded,—that I would explain the manner in which the principle of holiness influences the temper and life. But, in truth, it was the casting in my mind the question, what might be the best manner of complying with your very acceptable request, that suggested to my mind the foregoing train of thinking. The holy Scriptures very frequently represent the progressive influence of the principle of holiness on the temper and conduct, under figures borrowed from the process of vegetation. It is considered as an incorruptible seed, which, sown by the great Husbandman, watered by the dews of divine influence, and warmed by the genial beams of the sun of righteousness, takes root, appears above the glebe, increases gradually in size and beauty,

blossoms, and bears fruit—the fruit of righteousness—till, transplanted to the paradise of God, it flourishes in immortal vigour, loveliness, and fertility. “I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon; his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return, they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the vine of Lebanon.” The same important idea of the active progressive nature of true holiness is suggested by those figures taken from different species of motion to denote its exercise; such as walking, running, wrestling, warfare. A holy life is, in Scripture, termed a walking with God—before him—in Christ—worthy of Christ, and of our Christian vocation;—a running the race set before us, so as to obtain. The saint is often represented as a soldier. Constantly encompassed with numerous and powerful enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, his whole life is a warfare; and in conducting its operations, he is called to exercise all the Christian graces—to put on the whole armour of God. The exercise of holiness is farther represented as a labour or work. “Labour not,” says our Lord, “for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” It is termed a conversation becoming the Gospel—a general tenor of temper and conduct suited to the truths and privileges, the hopes and designs of the Gospel. It is farther called obedience. This includes a dutiful subjection of the understanding to the doctrines of the Gospel—the believing what God reveals, because he reveals it—the obedience of faith—a cheerful submission of the heart to the influences of the divine Spirit—an universal regulation of the life by the dictates of his holy law—and an unreserved resignation to all the appointments of his good providence.

The exercise of holiness must always be viewed in

its relation to the atonement of Jesus, and the faith of forgiveness through that atonement. I borrow, on this subject, the words of a very learned and holy man, (Dr Owen). "Without the atonement, all that you do, however it may please your own minds, or ease your consciences, is not at all accepted of God ;—unless this foundation be laid, all that you do is lost. All your prayers, all your duties, all your amendments, are an abomination unto the Lord. Until peace is made with him they are but the acts of enemies, which he despiseth and abhorreth. You run, it may be, earnestly, but you run out of the way. You strive, but not lawfully, and shall never receive the crown. True Gospel obedience is the fruit of the faith of forgiveness. Whatever you do without it is but a building without a foundation—a castle in the air. You may see the order of Gospel obedience ; Eph. ii. 7—10. The foundation must be laid in grace, riches of grace by Christ, in the free pardon and forgiveness of sin. From hence must the works of obedience proceed, if you would have them to be of God's appointment, or find acceptance with him. Without this, God will say of all your services, worship, obedience, as he did to the Israelites of old ; Amos v. 21—25. I despise it all, I reject it all. It is not to him, nor to his glory. If you have not received the atonement in the blood of his Son ; if you are not made partakers of forgiveness ; if you are not pardoned, all your duties are accursed."

The exercise of holiness may be considered as either internal or external—as consisting in the exertion of Christian graces, and the practice of holy duties—in good tempers, and good works. Among the former we may rank knowledge, faith, repentance, &c. Knowledge, which is termed in Scripture eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand, includes in it an acquaintance with ourselves, with the worth of our souls, our state before God, our temper, endowments and conduct, in their principles, motives, manner, and ends, and of the manifold deceitfulness and corruptions of our

heart,—an acquaintance with Christ, in his person, natures, offices, relations, qualifications, work and fulness ; an acquaintance with God in his perfections, persons, purposes, works, doctrines, laws, promises, and threatenings, as connected with, and manifested in Christ.

Faith is to be considered not merely in the view which we have already taken of it, as a mean of holiness, but as an essential and important part of it. By faith we receive the testimony of God, on his own authority, and thus receive and rest in Christ alone for salvation, as he is therein clearly exhibited and offered. I repeat it, wherever there is true faith there is an assured belief of God's testimony on his own authority, for this is its essence ; but this assurance is stronger or weaker, more or less mingled with doubts and fears in different saints, and in the same saint at different times. It is strong and full when we disregard every objection which presents itself against the testimony of God ; when Christ is highly prized, and firmly trusted ; when great difficulties are anticipated without fear, and encountered without reluctance ; when we habitually draw near with mingled feelings of confidence and veneration to God as our father in Christ ; when the persuasion of his redeeming love is tenaciously retained, notwithstanding fearful hidings, and even frowns of his countenance ; and when the promises are relied on with unshaken confidence, even when providential dispensations seem very hostile to their fulfilment. This full assurance of faith is highly honourable to God, and forms one of the most important parts of the exercise of holiness.

Repentance, which consists in an habitual hatred of, and sorrow for sin, as contrary to the divine character and will, murderous to the Redeemer, and, by its condemning and polluting influence, ruinous to our own souls, proceeds from a knowledge and belief of the declarations of God's law and gospel, a conviction of our own real state and character, and a believing applica-

tion of God's forgiving mercy, through the blood of his Son. The justness of this description of this important Christian grace, will appear from the following passages of Scripture: "I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God;" Ezek. xvi. 62, 63. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look on me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born;" Zech. xii. 10. The grief for sin in repentance is hearty, godly, universal, proportioned, superlative, fixed, and accompanied with a gracious self-aversion. The hatred of sin is constant, universal, and in aim and endeavour perfect; extending not only to what is obviously sinful, but to all that has the appearance of evil, and is conjoined with a humbled heart and universal turning from it to God in Christ as our portion and master, companion and Lord, with full purpose of and endeavour after new obedience. This obedience, in which genuine repentance terminates, is new in its foundation, principle, motives, manner, and ends.

The repentance I have been endeavouring to describe is very different from that legal fear, grief for and hatred against sin, which are produced by conviction in unregenerate men. They differ in many respects. They differ in their *order*. Legal repentance follows a legal faith of the law as a covenant only. Evangelical repentance follows the saving faith of the gospel. They differ in their *cause*. Legal repentance arises from apprehension of God's revenging wrath manifested in his threatenings and judgments; but evangelical repentance proceeds from apprehensions of revenging wrath manifested in Christ's death,

and of the free and full pardon of all our sins. They differ in their *object*. In legal repentance men are chiefly affected with their gross sins, and the punishment with which they are connected ; but in evangelical repentance, we are chiefly affected with secret and beloved sins, and with sin, as odious to God and injurious to their souls. They differ in their *effects*. Legal repentance turns men only from gross acts of sin, works death, fills with inward rage against God, and sometimes even leads to self-murder ; but evangelical repentance turns from the love of every sin, and works salvation and eternal life. If my friend would wish to see the difference between legal and evangelical holiness more fully illustrated, he will find much satisfaction in consulting an excellent explication of this subject, in " Dickinson's Familiar Letters," a book altogether worthy of a very attentive and repeated perusal.

If we would repent, we must believe. The promise is, as we have already seen, " they shall look on him whom they pierced, and shall mourn." And, from the sacred history, we learn, that the great number who believed turned to the Lord ; Acts, xi. 21. We find the objects of faith and promises of grace exhibited as the great motives to repentance. " Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God ;" Jer. iii. 22. " Therefore, now saith the Lord God, Turn ye to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God ; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil ;" Joel ii. 12, 13. In repenting, we should believe that, whatever our guilt be, God is reconciled to our salvation in Christ, and will be, actually reconciled to our persons in believing. Let us believe that God is able and willing to save both from sin and wrath ; and that he has given his consent to be ours in the word. Let us believe, on his own and his

Father's authority, that Christ is set forth in the Gospel a propitiation for our sins. Let us, while trusting in him, look at our sin and at our Saviour alternately, and then our hearts will be melted into holy contrition for all the iniquities we have done. "Let them that will," says the judicious and holy Boston, "repent, that Christ may do for them. I shall desire always to believe what Christ has done for me that I may repent, not doubting that my being instructed therein is the plain way to smiting on the thigh, and saying, What have I done?"—

Love to God is another temper of high consequence in the exercise of holiness. The object of his affection is a redeeming God—a God reconciled in Christ. We love the God of glory; but it is principally as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of peace and salvation. "Often and willingly," says the great German Reformer, "do I inculcate this, that you should shut your eyes and ears, and say you know no God out of Christ." The foundation of this affection towards a redeeming God is a perception of the infinite excellencies of his covenant character, and of the infinite value of the blessings which in this character he freely offers and sovereignly confers. It includes in it high esteem and tender affection. "There is none," says the regenerate soul, "there is none like the God of Jeshurun." "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none in all the earth whom I desire besides thee." It manifests itself in eager desires to obtain the enjoyment of fellowship with him and conformity to his image, ("when shall I come and appear before God?") in habitually thinking of, and feeling towards him as our supreme pleasure and portion—in believing what he reveals, because he reveals it; doing what he commands, because he commands it; and submitting to what he appoints, because he appoints it: in a holy alarm, lest in any instance we offend him; in a deep sorrow for the dishonour done to his character and law; in an affectionate regard to his laws and

people, and ordinances, because they are *his*: and in humble, constant, vigorous, and persevering endeavours to promote the interests of his glory in the world. He who would thus love God must make his new covenant characters, as the God of grace and peace, the subject of his frequent and believing meditation, and must cautiously guard against that undue love of the world which is incompatible with the love of the Father. This holy temper is absolutely necessary as a preparative for the celestial state. The grand employment of heaven is the love of God; and he only is fitted to engage in it, who, in the present state, has had the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

The love of Christ is another holy temper which forms a necessary part of the internal exercise of holiness. This affection, which enters into the very essence of the holiness of a saved sinner, originates in a believing contemplation of the essential and mediatorial excellencies of the Redeemer; his unbounded love to his people; his numerous tender and useful relations; his invaluable benefits of grace and glory. It is discovered by leading us frequently to meditate with profound seriousness and ardent delight on the scriptural exhibition of his character; to rely with humble, yet unshaken confidence, on Him, for all we need for time and eternity; to devote ourselves cheerfully to his service, resolving to be his only, wholly, and for ever; to love all who bear a resemblance to him; (for if we love him who begat, we will love also those who are begotten of him;) to exert ourselves to the utmost within the sphere of our influence, for promoting the advancement of the interests of his kingdom; to rejoice in him, and his love, though deprived of every earthly comfort, and to desire, though at the expense of dissolution, to be with him where he is, that we may behold his glory. The distinguishing characters of this holy affection are, sincerity, fervour, activity, universality, supremacy, and constancy.

In noticing thus shortly those holy tempers which form the constituent parts of the internal exercise of holiness, I must not forget to mention the love of our brethren of mankind. This is not a natural disposition of the human mind ; for the holy Scriptures represent mankind as “ hateful and hating one another.” It is a grace of the divine Spirit, conferred at the same time when he sheds abroad in our hearts the love of God. Its essence is a generous and ardent wish to promote the real happiness of all men. Viewed as exerted towards mankind at large it is benevolence ; towards the miserable, it is sympathy ; towards the saints, it is brotherly kindness. It is manifested in restraining and opposing all the malignant tempers of envy, hatred, and revenge ; in preventing all injury to our neighbours, preserving from harsh judgment, evil speaking, and every thing inconsistent with the law of justice and love ; in exciting to exertions for their real welfare ; in leading to pray for them, to forgive injuries, to honour them, to judge charitably of their conduct and character, to relieve their necessities, to warn, reprove, and admonish them, to use every method in our power to make them savingly acquainted with the Redeemer ; in one word, to endeavour to promote to the utmost their real interests, both temporal and spiritual, —to make them happy both in time and eternity.

The love of the brethren is the general principle of benevolence, modified by the peculiar circumstances of those towards whom it is exerted. This temper leads us to account the saints, with David, the excellent ones of the earth, and to place in them all our delight. It is grounded on the perception of their connexion with the Redeemer, and leads us to give a higher place in our affection to the saint of God, however mean his station and limited his intellectual acquirements, though learned only in the Bible, and wise only for eternity, than to the irreligious possessor of rank and riches, learning and genius. The degree of this affection will always be pro-

portioned to the degree of perceived resemblance and affection to the Saviour.

And now, my dear Theron, before I proceed farther in the enumeration of those holy tempers in which the internal exercise of holiness consists, let me pause a little, and direct your mind to the powerful influence which the death of Jesus, as a source of motive, has on the production and growth of these holy principles. It is a truth which cannot be too deeply rivetted in our minds, that nothing can so effectually excite holy tempers, as a faith in a redemption perfectly finished through means of the debasement and ignominy, the labours and sorrows, the agonies and the death of the Son of God,—of God manifest in flesh, in the form of a servant, of a slave, of an accused malefactor. What, my friend, is so well calculated to make us really penitent, as a believing contemplation of the death of Christ? We must look on Him whom we have pierced, if we would mourn for our sins, after a godly sort. What are the two truths, a deep conviction of which is at once necessary and sufficient to excite repentance? Are they not the forgiving mercy of God, and the inconceivable evil of sin? And what is the most striking proof of both these truths? Is it not the death of Christ? Herein is the love of God manifested, in that he gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins; and surely, herein also is the evil of sin manifested in that it was necessary that the Son of God should offer up himself in order to procure deliverance from its guilt, its power, and its consequences to his people.—One grand design of all the dispensations of God, in the government of the moral world, has been to discover his hatred of iniquity,—and numerous and splendid are the discoveries of this kind which he has made. A blasted paradise, a barren earth, a deluged world; the fiery desolation of Sodom and Gomorrah; the unnumbered and inconceivable miseries of war, and famine, and pestilence; the desolations occasioned by volcanoes and earthquakes:—these are

all most convincing evidences that sin is an evil thing and a bitter. But beyond comparison, the most striking proof of the malignity of sin, is that afforded by the sufferings and death of the Son of God. When, in order to expiate sin, we find the eternal Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh ; “ God accused by man of blasphemy, the eternal wisdom aspersed with folly, truth itself of imposture, essential love made guilty of mischief, and supreme goodness styled a malefactor, infinite power trampled on by impotent malice,—the Judge of all the world, the fountain of all authority and right, arraigned, condemned, and executed, for injustice,—the desire of all nations rejected by his own countrymen,—the joy of paradise, where lightsome countenance doth cheer heaven itself, almost overwhelmed with grief, uttering lamentable groans, tortured with grievous agonies ; the very heart of God bleeding, and the sole author of life expiring ;*” and reflect that all this was necessary in order to our being delivered from sin, surely we must be overwhelmed with a sense of the malignity of sin in general, and sorrow and shame for our own individual transgressions. The debt must have been great, which could only be discharged by a price so precious,—the stain must have been deep, which could be washed away only by the blood of God’s Son,—the distemper must have been dangerous, when the remedy is so costly. Standing, like John, at the foot of the cross, and fixing the eye of the mind steadily on the divine sufferer, how natural is it to burst forth in such penitential accents as these : “ He is wounded for my transgressions ! Accursed be those sins which pierced the hands, opened the side, broke the heart of the Son of God. He dies that I may not die for ever. Shall I not live to him who thus dies for me ? He gives himself for me that he may redeem^e me from all iniquity. Shall I ungratefully and impiously counteract, in my heart and practice, the design of his death ? Shall I still

* Barrow, v. iii. p. 388.

cling to the murderers of my Lord? Shall I anew open his wounds and crucify him afresh by my sinful temper and conduct? No, I will not do this wickedness, and sin against my redeeming God, my crucified Saviour. I will crucify those lusts which crucified him. I will mortify those tempers and habits which laid him low in death. He died a sacrifice for my salvation, and through his grace, I shall be a living sacrifice to his honour." Such are the penitential thoughts and feelings which naturally arise from a believing contemplation of the death of Christ.

Nor less direct and powerful is the influence of believing views of the death of Christ, in promoting the heavenly temper of love to God. On what is the love of God founded, but on his infinite excellence and on his goodness to us? Now, where is there to be found so striking a display of the divine excellencies in general, and especially of his redeeming goodness, as in that wonderful dispensation, the death of his Son for sinners? "We love him because he first loved us," says an apostle. The more strongly, then, we are persuaded of his love, the more ardently we will love him. Now, surely, nothing can more strongly illustrate the love of God than the giving up his Son to obey, suffer, and die for us. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "God *so* loved the world as to give his only begotten Son both *for us* and *to us*." The expression *so* loved, is peculiarly emphatic; it intimates the inexpressible degree of the tenderness and ardour of the divine love. Love reigns here triumphant, and breaks forth in all its mild and majestic glories. No greater gift could be bestowed; nor could this greatest gift be conferred in a manner more descriptive of the matchless love from which it originated. What an astonishing idea does it give us of the love of God, that he should lay on the dearest worthiest object of his love the iniquities of us all, and

that it should please him to bruise him as our substitute, that by his stripes we might be healed. The love of God was the spring of the whole scheme of our redemption. It is owing to this that Jesus was born, and lived, and died for our salvation, so it must never be forgotten that the Son of God died not to make his Father merciful, but because he was merciful ; not to make him disposed to pity and pardon, and save men, but to make the discovery of these merciful dispositions consistent with the honours of his law and justice ; not to make an alteration in the divine nature, but in the state and condition of fallen man. Does not the love of the Father, as thus displayed, pass all understanding ? and does not the ear of faith hear a voice proceeding from the cross and grave of the Saviour : O love the Lord all ye his saints ?

If the death of Christ be, as we have just seen, so well fitted, when viewed in the exercise of faith, to excite love to God, it is surely not less calculated to inflame our affection to the Saviour himself. “Greater love has no man than that he lay down his life for his friends.” But greater love did Jesus manifest towards us, for while we were enemies he died for us. That he who was “in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God,” should for our sakes become obedient to death, even the death of the cross,—what a wonderful display of love.—How free was this love ; for what obligation could be on him to love *us* ! How disinterested ; for what could we profit him, who is God over all, blessed for ever !—How ardent and strong ! “Many waters could not quench, neither could the floods drown it.” How numerous and important are the benefits procured for us by this death ! Who can speak the value of Eternal Redemption ! To the death of Christ we owe all that is valuable and felicitous in the enjoyment of the favour of God the Father ; the intercession of God the Son ; and the regenerating, sanctifying, and comforting influence of God the Spirit. Here then surely, I may say, is the fire and the

wood, but where is the victim to be sacrificed? Is not your heart, my friend, enflamed with a reciprocal affection, to Him who so loved you as not to love his life to the death for your sake? Do you not feel yourself sweetly constrained to render love for love? To employ the emphatic language of Dr Owen, "Hath he the heart of a Christian, who doth not often meditate on the death of the Saviour—who doth not derive life from it? Can any have believing thoughts concerning the death of Christ, and not have his heart affected with tender love to his person? As his whole name, in all that he did, is as ointment poured forth, for which the virgins love him, (Song i. 3.); so this precious perfume of his death, is that wherewith their hearts are ravished in a peculiar manner. They know nothing of the life and power of the Gospel, nothing of the reality of the grace of God, whose hearts are not sensible of the love of God. I had rather choose my eternal lot and portion with the meanest believer, who, being effectually sensible of the love of Christ, spends his days in mourning, that he can love him no more than he finds himself, on his utmost endeavours, for the discharge of his duty to do, than with the best of those whose vain speculation, and a false pretence to reason, puff them up into a contempt of these things."

We have not yet exhausted this boundless store of motive to holy tempers, the death of Christ. How powerfully does the believing contemplation of this great event stimulate to the love of our fellow men, and especially to the love of our fellow Christians?—Who can withstand the force of the reasoning? If God—if Christ so loved us, we also should love one another. If Christ so loved men as to die for them, can it become us to hate them, or even to feel indifferent as to their happiness? Can we neglect obedience to the command to love one another with a pure heart fervently, when we recollect that He who gave it died for our salvation. "Hereby," says the Apostle, "perceive we the love of God, because he laid

down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Can we contemplate this most striking proof of the love of the Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, and yet, having the world's goods, shut up our bowels of compassion from our necessitous brother? Can we reflect on the display of disinterestedness and generosity, and forgiveness, he gave in his death, and not be willing to spend, and be spent for the happiness of our brethren—to forgive our enemies, bless them who curse us, and pray for them who despitefully use and persecute us? How persuasive is the reasoning of the Apostle, in the following passage:—"Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, and counted it no robbery to be equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation, took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 5, 6.) Those men who are indifferent about the happiness of mankind, still more those men who are habitually uncharitable, malignant, and revengeful, whatever may be their profession, have never yet by faith so contemplated the death of Christ, as to feel its transforming efficacy.

But, to return from this long digression. To particularise all the Christian tempers and habits, in which the exercise of holiness consists, would far exceed the bounds, (sufficiently extensive for a letter,) to which I intend to confine myself.—The following hints respecting some of the most important of them, will not, I trust, be altogether useless to you:—Christian Wisdom or Prudence is one of the forms in which the general principle of holiness manifests itself. This divine grace is profitable to direct: It enables the saint to choose proper ends, and proper means for gaining these ends; it regulates the time, place, and circumstances of actions; it points out

the enemies from whom we stand in the greatest hazard of receiving harm, and the friends and companions from whom we are likely to receive the greatest advantage : it instructs us in the manner of employing both the ordinances, and the providences of God for our spiritual improvement ; and shows how we may pass through the world with the least injury, and the greatest advantage both to ourselves and others, with the greatest credit to our religion and honour to our God.

A second of these holy tempers is spirituality of mind. This is a habitual bias of the thoughts and affections to spiritual objects, and implies a deep conviction of their reality and importance, and a steady preference of them to those visible and material objects which employ the thoughts and fix the affections of the greater part of mankind.

Purity of heart forms another important part of the exercise of holiness, and consists in an invincible hatred of all sin, especially of those sins to which, from bodily propensities, we are naturally inclined, connected with a real sorrow for our offences of this kind, and an earnest desire for complete freedom from every tendency to impurity. It produces a hatred even of the garment spotted by the flesh, and prompts the prayer :—" Create in me a clean heart, O Lord ! "

Another essential part of the exercise of holiness is sincerity. This Christian grace, very different from the Pagan virtue which often wears its name, consists in aiming, with an undivided attention, to please and honour God ; in endeavouring to know our duty in all its extent, and to do it to the full limits of our knowledge ; and in maintaining an exact conformity between our inward sentiments and our external professions and conduct.

Resignation is the next holy temper I shall notice. This is something totally different from the apathy recommended by the Stoical philosophers. It does not include in it a renunciation of the natural feelings of hu-

manity. It is no way incompatible with feeling very keenly the afflictive dispensations of providence,—indeed if they are not felt, they are not afflictions; and consequently do not answer their end. It does not prohibit our humbly inquiring into the reasons of the divine procedure, our desiring deliverance, nor our using carefully every lawful means of alleviation and relief. It consists in a hearty approbation of the divine conduct in every part of it in reference to ourselves, founded in a firm conviction of the wisdom and goodness of a redeeming God, and a cheerful acquiescence in all the appointments of his providence. The resigned Christian is well satisfied as to his station and calling in the world, as to his intellectual endowments, as to the measure of his earthly comforts, as to the place which he occupies in the estimation of mankind, as to his afflictions in their kind, degree, number, and continuance; and, in fine, as to the manner and time of their death. With regard to all these, though the appointments may be very opposite to natural inclination, the resigned saint endeavours to say, ‘It is the Lord, let him do with me what seemeth good in his sight; good is the will of the Lord*.’

There is no temper of mind more essentially necessary to the exercise of holiness than humility. This includes, as to ourselves, low thoughts of our own station and character as creatures and sinners, of our abilities, and of our attainments; a self-abhorrence, arising from a conviction of guilt, and sense of remaining depravity, and a singleness

* We have a very remarkable instance of resignation in the conduct of the celebrated Fenelon. When his illustrious and very hopeful pupil, the Duke of Burgundy, lay dead in his coffin, and the nobles of the court stood weeping around, the Archbishop came into the apartment, and having fixed his eyes for some time on the corpse, broke out in terms to the following effect:—“There lies my beloved prince, for whom my affection was equal to the tenderest regard of the tenderest parent; nor was my affection lost. He loved me in return with the ardour of a son. There he lies, and all my happiness lies dead with him. But, if the turning of a straw would call him back to life, I would not, for ten thousand worlds, be the turner of that straw in opposition to the will of God.”

of heart in the discharge of duty, as opposed to vanity and ostentation. As to others, it implies a preferring others before ourselves: a looking, not merely without envy, but with pleasure, on the superior gifts and graces of others, and produces an affable courteous behaviour to all. As to God, as a redeeming God, it includes high and admiring thoughts of the Divine Majesty; a holy fear of offending him; a high estimation of every expression of the divine bounty toward men in general, and towards ourselves in particular; a giving God the glory of all we are as saints, and all we are enabled to do in his service; a silent resignation to the afflictive dispensations of divine Providence; a renouncing of every claim to merit; and a receiving Christ as of God made to us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*.

Closely connected with humility is meekness, which includes in it a ready and full subjection of soul to God's authority and grace; an inward and cheerful resignation to his providence; a calmness under provocation†; a readiness to forgive injuries from our fellow men; a carefully avoiding to give offence to others; and a mild placid demeanour towards all around them. Patience, a sister grace to humility and meekness, consists in bearing injuries unmerited, and long-continued,

* What a beautiful exemplification of this Christian temper do the following expressions of Archbishop Leighton exhibit:—"Oh Jesus, my Saviour, impress thy blessed humility on my heart. Make me most sensible of thine infinite dignity, and of my own vileness, that I may hate myself as a thing of nought, and be willing to be despised and trodden down by all as the vilest mire in the street: that I may still retain these words, *I am nothing—I have nothing—I can do nothing—and I desire nothing but one.*"

† The following anecdote of Boerhaave is worthy of a place here. A friend of his who had often admired his patience under the greatest provocations, asked him by what means he had so entirely suppressed that impetuous ungovernable passion, anger? The Doctor answered, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, that naturally he was quick of resentment, but by daily prayer he had attained that mastery over himself.

from men without resentment ; in receiving quietly and even thankfully, heavy and manifold afflictions from the hand of God ; and in submissively waiting for his promised favours, however long delayed. Peaceableness is another part of the exercise of holiness, and is discovered in carefully avoiding to give offence, and in guarding with equal care against groundlessly taking offence ; in anxiously endeavouring to preserve peace when enjoyed, and to regain it when lost ; by giving satisfaction to those whom we may have offended ; and by convincing, warning, and forgiving those who have offended us. Another holy temper is included the general holy disposition implanted in regeneration, is tenderness of heart. By this I do not mean mere sympathy with the sorrows of our fellow men, but an acute sensibility to spiritual objects ; an inward pliability to divine influences ; a readiness to engage heartily in known duties ; a disposition to mourn for the dishonour done to the divine law ; and for the guilt and depravity, these worst miseries of the human race. Nor does this temper produce an unmanly weakness of character, for it is conjoined with that fortitude which, generally, in the New Testament, receives the name of virtue. This manifests itself by suppressing slavish fears of apparently impending calamity, and producing steady boldness in the prosecution of dutiful undertakings, however difficult.

This fortitude is animated by zeal, which consists in an earnest abhorrence of that which is evil, and an eager desire to maintain and promote that which is good. No Christian temper has been more injured in general estimation than zeal, in consequence of the general prevalence of bigotry and ill nature frequently assuming its name. It is necessary, therefore, that we take care that our zeal be enlightened ; decided in opposition to what we know to be wrong and in support of what we know to be right, and proportioned to the nature and importance of things ; that it stir us up to the personal cultivation of what is good,

and the personal abstinence from what is evil ; that it be free from all tincture of malignity and uncharitableness ; and that it never prompt us to the adoption of schemes for the advancement of truth or virtue improper in themselves, or unsuitable to our talents or rank in life.

The next holy temper I mention is temperance, or a stated aversion to such indulgences of the senses and appetites as would indispose our bodies to be subservient to the interests of our soul ; mispend that worldly substance which ought to be devoted to other and higher purposes ; taint the mind with impure and unworthy affections, and unfit us for meeting with seriousness and composure that awful event which calls us into the immediate presence of our Lord. I must not neglect to mention justice, which includes in it a fixed determination and disposition to render to God, ourselves and others, that which respectively belongs to them ; and to sacrifice our own rights, and wrong ourselves, much rather than violate the sacred respect due to the rights of our neighbour. The prophet joins together doing justly and loving mercy. In the character of the saint, they are uniformly conjoined. He sympathizes with distress in all its various forms, and according to his ability he administers relief. I conclude this rapid and unconnected survey of the various parts of the exercise of holiness, by mentioning truth, candour, and faithfulness, which include a fixed aversion from falsehood in all its forms and degrees, and an inclination to maintain and promote truth on every proper occasion, and to act strictly agreeably to our characters, stations, and engagements*.

After this review of these holy tempers, do you not my dear friend, burn with desire to exemplify them all in your habitual deportment ? Cherish the desire, but never forget that the best, the only method of having it

* The reader may consult with profit Evans's Christian Temper, Mason's Christian Morals, Watts' Sermons on Christian Morality, and M'Ewen's Essays.

satisfied is, to appropriate and plead those exceeding great and precious promises, in which these gracious tempers are represented as privileges freely bestowed by God. There are multitudes of such promises. I mention only the few following: "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people;" Jer. xxxi. 33. "And I will give them one heart and one way, and they shall fear me for ever; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. "A new heart also will I give you, and a right spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."

It must never be forgotten, that, to render these tempers truly Christian, they must be produced in a heart united to Christ by gracious virtue, derived from Christ and his Spirit, through means of his Spirit dwelling in us richly; and they must be exercised in obedience to the authority of Christ, in conformity to the example of Christ, and with a design to promote the honour of Christ and of God through him. I know you earnestly desire to abound in the exercise of these holy tempers. And I know nothing better calculated to call them forth into lively exertion, than a believing view of the blessed atonement, as exhibited in the word of the truth of the gospel, satisfying all the demands of the violated law, and completely expiating all our iniquities. Contemplating this with a firm faith, you will find love, zeal, devotedness to God, and every other good temper, spring up in copious abundance in your heart. I can say from experience, that it

is by the personal appropriation, and the perpetual improvement of this inestimable blessing, the surety righteousness of the Redeemer, that I am strengthened for the exercise of holy tempers, and the discharge of commanded duties. It is thus I learn to delight myself in God, and to love my neighbour as myself. Of what I recommend to my friend I have in innumerable instances felt the advantage. Let us ever view these holy tempers as promised privileges, when we endeavour to exercise them as commanded duties. When viewing faith as not of ourselves, but the gift of God, we exert this holy temper; we are filled with joy and peace in believing, and are protected, as by a shield, from all the fiery darts of the devil. Exercising hope, we have an helmet to defend our heads in the day of battle, and an anchor to preserve our bark safe amid the tempests of temptation and affliction. While he traverses the uncertain ocean of life, the saint is often exposed to the most dreadful storms; but hope, as an anchor fixing itself on the atoning merits of Jesus, and on the perfections and promises of a redeeming God, preserves him from sinking, and keeps him firm and stedfast in the midst of the most tumultuous commotions of surrounding things. It purifies their heart, and makes them active in the service of God; like the Jewish Christians, who instantly served God night and day, hoping to come at the promised benefit.

Farther, if we would wish to exercise these holy tempers, we must have no confidence in the flesh; no confidence in our natural endowments, or acquired accomplishments; no confidence in the means of grace; no confidence in our purposes, resolutions, vows, and engagements; no confidence in our endeavours after holiness; no confidence in good frames; no confidence in habitual grace. To all these we must say, What have I to do any more with idols? I would also advise you to beware of raising your expectations too high as to the degree of

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holiness which is attainable in the present state. Endeavour to obtain the very highest degree. Aim at perfection ; let nothing short of perfection satisfy you ; but do not expect to reach perfection in the present state. The law, as a rule, requires perfect obedience, but never any perfectly answered its requisitions but the man Christ Jesus. There will always be sins in the heart, corrupt wishes, unbelieving reasonings ; there will always be defects in our best obedience : too much indifference towards God ; too much earthly-mindedness ; too many wanderings of the heart from God. The corrupt principle will be often leading us astray. These ought to be the subject of deep humiliation before God, but they ought not to discourage our faith. A pain at the heart under the sense of sin ; a delight in the law of the Lord after the inward man ; and constant and vigorous endeavours after complete holiness, are the highest degrees of perfection attainable in the present state.

In one word, be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus. This advice supposes that you are spiritually alive ; and it calls for readiness, resolution, and fortitude in the discharge of duty. This is necessary, for in the exercise of these tempers and graces, we have many obstacles to remove ; many burdens to bear ; many enemies to combat ; and it is all to be obtained from the fulness of Christ. In this fulness there is, to use the language of systematic divines, relative grace—the free sovereign favour of God ; and there is real grace—the fulness of the Spirit. Now, to be strong in this, is to be animated by the faith of that grace, which is in Christ Jesus, both relative and real, to the vigorous exercise of these holy tempers, and the active discharge of the duties to which they naturally lead. This grace you will find absolutely necessary, and altogether sufficient. For my own part, I honestly declare, that I neither desire nor expect the smallest degree of holiness, in the exercise of these graces, either in time or eternity, but what I derive from Him,

as my head of vital influential union. He must be made of God to me sanctification through the powerful communication of his grace and spirit, as well as my alone righteousness; and for this cause I value that holiness which flows from this spring, because I am sure it is well pleasing to God, and will never step in to veil the sovereignty of divine grace. I conclude, with heartily wishing that you may be enabled daily to put on Christ, that so you may be renewed in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. Present the same prayer in my behalf, as the best proof of your friendship for,

Your affectionate friend,

ASPASIO.

LETTER V.

ON THE PLEASURES OF EVANGELICAL HOLINESS.

My Dear Theron,

The desire of happiness is an original principle of our nature, universal in its extent, powerful in its influence, and lasting in its duration. Confined to no country, it operates with equal force in the Greenlander who shivers under the pole, and the African who glows under the ardour of a tropical sun. Peculiar to no rank, it equally animates the heart, and regulates the conduct of the peasant and the prince. Limited to no age, it gives birth to the cries of the infant, the amusements of the boy, and the business of the man of more advanced years. When the glow of youth has passed away, the ardour of this principle continues unabated; and even when all the bodily organs and mental faculties have felt the paralyzing touch of old age, its vigour remains unimpaired. Over the powers of the intellect, the affections of the heart, and the actions of the life, it exerts a constant and powerful influence. The various changes which our

sentiments, our characters, and our situations may undergo, may change its direction, but they cannot effect its destruction. While we continue to exist, we must continue to wish for happiness. It may be laid down as a principle, that a religion which comes from God will be suited to the constitution of the human mind; and, in particular, be calculated to meet and gratify this inextinguishable thirst for enjoyment, which is one of the most general characteristics of our species. This is pre-eminently the case with the religion of Christ.—It is fitted to make man happy, up to his largest capacity of enjoyment. What all are earnestly wishing and eagerly seeking, is to be found here, and here alone. This is the rest, and this is the refreshing, whereby God causes the weary to rest.

In order to our forming just notions of the pleasures of evangelical religion, it is absolutely necessary that we should constantly recollect, that all these pleasures originate in, and are intimately connected with, the Lord Jesus Christ. The true circumcision—the genuine people of God, when they rejoice, rejoice in Christ Jesus.

Religious pleasure may be considered either as *habitual*, or as *actual*. By habitual pleasure, I understand that disposition of heart, produced by the regenerating influence of the Divine Spirit, towards Jesus Christ, which induces the individual to regard him as the supreme object of his affection, and the inexhaustible source of his joy; and as it was the disposition of Adam's will to compliance with the Divine will, which denominated him righteous even previously to his actual performance of holy actions, so all in whose hearts this tendency to draw their pleasure from Christ is formed, even though but very imperfectly acquainted with the exercise of Christian joy, may be termed rejoicers in Christ. This habitual joy in Christ is possessed by every Christian, even in his most gloomy hours; and as, in the most flourishing state of the sinner's pleasure, there is a worm at the

root which will soon make them wither, so, when the Christian soul exhibits nothing but a scene of barrenness, there is a seed of pleasure which, though now under the clod, will soon spring up, and turn the desert waste into a garden of the Lord. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Wherever this habitual pleasure in Christ exists, it prevents the person from taking supreme delight in any thing else. He has lost his former relish for earthly pleasure, and the language of his heart is, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus."

Actual pleasure in Christ is this disposition in exercise—the soul's solacing itself in Christ, and improving him in all his various characters for promoting its consolation and joy. It is obvious that the enjoyment of this kind of pleasure must depend on the exercise of faith, and the degree of this pleasure will be greater or less, according to the strength or weakness of that grace. This actual pleasure may be viewed in two different aspects,—as sensible or rational. Sensible pleasure is enjoyed by the saint, when the contemplation of the Saviour's personal and mediatorial excellencies, in their relation to his own state and prospects, diffuses a rapturous sensation of joy and triumph throughout his soul—a joy unspeakable and full of glory, inducing him to say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;" Luke i. 46. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels;" Isa. lxi. 10. In the present state, we are so closely connected with sensible things, that we will scarcely admit that any thing deserves the name of pleasure, which does not produce these rapturous emotions; yet there is questionless also what may be termed a rational pleasure in Christ, unaccompanied with this tumultuous

delight. By rational pleasure in Christ, I mean that satisfaction which the saint possesses, from a fixed conviction of the value and excellence of the object of his affection and esteem. The difference between these two kinds of religious pleasure, may be illustrated from the experience of the man Christ Jesus.—Being a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs, he was in a great measure a stranger to sensible pleasure, though we read that in a certain hour he rejoiced in spirit, *i. e.* was filled with sensible transport, Luke x. 21.; yet it is plain that he enjoyed a rational satisfaction throughout the whole tenor of his life, John xv. 11. I need not tell you, who are so familiarly acquainted with the inspired original of the New Testament, that the words which are respectively employed by the sacred writers in the passages above quoted, are descriptive of different species of joy. The former, which is the same which the Holy Virgin employs to express her transport, denotes what we would call rapture; the other denotes what we should term calm satisfaction, rational delight. Sensible pleasure in Christ is not the ordinary experience of any Christian, and it may indeed admit of question, whether there may not have been real Christians, who have never tasted of it till they drank the new wine of unmingled delight in their Father's kingdom. This we know from an infallible authority, that there are some who are all their lifetime in bondage, through fear of death, Heb. ii. 5. But every believer, in a degree corresponding to the strength and activity of his other graces, habitually enjoys this rational satisfaction; for, if the kingdom of God be righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, wherever it comes, these must be there also. It is this pleasure that I intend to make my theme in the remaining part of this letter.

+ This pleasure, which is entirely different from the joy of the hypocrite arising from his confidence in the flesh, may be described as the resting of the soul in Christ. The

conscience full of guilt, and tortured with fear, finds rest in his blessed atonement, and the heart replete with desires, centres in, and is satisfied with, the fulness of his grace. It may be viewed as the enlargement of the soul, formerly straitened or fettered by sorrow,—the elevation of the heart to heaven, formerly bound down by worldly affections,—the triumph of the whole man in Jehovah as his Saviour. It is thus described by those who have felt it:—"Thou hast turned my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.—They who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up on wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Descending from heaven, it raises the soul to heaven: "My soul shall make its boast in the Lord." Boasting in ourselves, is entirely excluded by the law of faith, yet every sharer of this celestial joy may, and ought to say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus."

This pleasure has a variety of peculiar advantages. It is a pleasure of which the saint cannot be deprived, by all the malice, power, and art of his spiritual enemies. It is a hidden treasure out of the sight and out of the reach of the world; it is a joy with which a stranger cannot intermeddle. The liberty, the worldly substance, the life of the saints may be taken from them; but who can deprive them of their joy? Paul and Silas, when in the inner prison, with their feet fast in the stocks, were still so full of this celestial pleasure, that it found vent in songs of praise. It is a pleasure suited to man's spiritual, rational, and immortal nature, as its objects are spiritual,—God and Christ, and things divine and heavenly. It is the pleasure, not of the fancy, but of the heart. "Thou hast put gladness into my heart," says David, "more than when their corn and oil are increased." It is a pleasure ever ready and near at hand. The pleasures of the wicked are from without, and they

are dependent on others for their attainment and their continuance. For example, the pleasures of the vain man depend on the esteem of his fellow-men. But the pleasures of religion are from within. A good man is satisfied from himself. His pleasures arise from his God and his grace, which are never far from him. It is, in one word, an unspeakable pleasure, so pure, so sublime, so satisfying, that none can make language of it; and it is full of glory—glorious in itself, and a lively foretaste of the glory to be revealed.

Should you inquire into the sources of this pleasure, I would reply, they are at once numerous and abundant. The divine perfections—infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, as harmoniously glorified in our salvation through Christ Jesus,—the Divine Persons Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all engaged in the work of our redemption;—the Father forming the amazing scheme—the Son carrying it into execution—and the Holy Spirit rendering all effectual for our everlasting welfare;—the new covenant characters of a redeeming God—the God of peace, of grace, of consolation—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,—the Hearer of prayer—and our own God;—the characters and relations of Christ, as the great Shepherd of the sheep, the Captain of salvation, the Lord our Healer, our Friend, our Husband;—the promises of grace, containing a full exhibition and a free offer of God and Christ, and salvation to men,—promises of pardon, such as “I, even I, am He who blotteth out your iniquities for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins:—“ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool:”—promises of God’s presence and grace, such as “My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest;”—“My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is perfected in weakness;”—promises of comfort, as, “I will satiate every

weary soul, I will replenish every sorrowful soul :”—“ I, even I, am he who comforteth you :”—“ I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you ;”—promises of heaven and glory,—“ It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” —“ The days of thy mourning shall be ended,” —“ Thy God shall be thy glory :”—these, these are the ever full and ever overflowing, the unexhausted and inexhaustible sources of the believer’s pleasure. These are the saints’ wells of salvation, from which they draw large draughts of consolation and joy. Well may they adopt the song of the Israelites, “ Spring up, O well ! sing ye unto it.”

It is a question of considerable interest, How are those pleasurable emotions, which may be produced by mere natural causes under religious ordinances, to be distinguished from that divine pleasure of which we are speaking? It cannot be doubted, that men may be highly pleased through means of the dispensation of divine truth, who are yet entire strangers to true religious pleasure. The modulation of the preacher’s voice may be pleasant to the ear, his graceful attitudes and gestures may be gratifying to the eye, the force of his reasonings may satisfy the judgment, the richness of his imagery may amuse the fancy, and the pathos of his descriptions may melt the affections,—so that, on the whole, the man may not only be pleased but delighted. Such seems to have been the case with the hearers of Ezekiel. “He was unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument,” Ezek. xxxiii. 32. With respect to this species of pleasure, it is necessary to remark, that it is not in itself culpable—these various qualities being naturally calculated to produce pleasure, and that it is frequently the concomitant and means of spiritual delight. Yet still they are two different things, and though often, they are not inseparably connected.

To satisfy ourselves as to the important point, whether our joy and pleasure be of a spiritual nature, let us in-

quire, whether it be principally what is spiritual and evangelical, such as the great truths of the Gospel in reference to the plan of salvation through Christ, and his suitableness, excellence, and amiableness as a Saviour, that principally produces the pleasurable movement of our affections; whether our hearts and consciences are touched, as well as our affections moved; whether we see and feel our own interest in the truths of the Gospel; and whether it be this perception that makes them peculiarly delightful to our souls. For example, when we hear of the doctrine of atonement for sin, through the righteousness of Christ, are we pleased merely because we are satisfied with the masterly manner in which it is proved to be taught in Scripture, and suited in general to the wants and wishes of guilty yet immortal man? or does our pleasure arise from our clearly perceiving, and deeply feeling, that we, as individuals guilty and condemned, need such an atonement, and that it is at once our right and our duty to trust in this expiatory sacrifice for the pardon of our sins, and the salvation of our souls? It will also serve to enable us to resolve this question, to inquire whether this pleasure is found to be a stimulant to the graces of faith, and love, and to have a sanctifying influence on our hearts and lives.

These plain remarks may be of some use in enabling you to distinguish between mere natural pleasure, and the peculiar and supernatural joys of religion. There is another question not less interesting, that naturally suggests itself here,—How may the pleasure of which we are speaking be distinguished from the joy of the hypocrite?—In order to enable you to answer this question to your satisfaction, I offer the following hints. Genuine religious pleasure is founded on Christ's person and work,—the Rock of ages, the foundation laid in Zion; but the pleasure of the hypocrite is founded on external privileges, and transitory frames and emotions. True spiritual joy is usually most powerfully felt, after the soul has

been most deeply humbled on account of sin. It is they who sow in tears, who reap in joy. It is they who mourn, that are comforted. On the contrary, delusive, hypocritical joy, is not preceded by this evangelical sorrow. Like the grain sown on the rocky soil, it springs up rapidly, and as rapidly withers and disappears. A good crop of grain is not to be expected without toil on the part of the husbandman; but weeds grow spontaneously. True spiritual pleasure is produced through the instrumentality of the word properly understood; delusive pleasure is produced without the intervention of the word, or through its misapplication. The joy of the Christian is full, through the word which Christ has spoken. If the joy of the hypocrite is full, it is through his own impressions. True spiritual pleasure is durable, but "the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." It is like the pleasure of the Jews under the Baptist's ministry, but for a season. But the joy of Christ abides in his people. It is indeed true, that even a true saint occasionally may lose his pleasure for a season; but here lies the difference between him and the hypocrite: When they lose the sense of their interest in Christ and his fulness, that is, when they lose sight of the ground of their joy,—their pleasure, of course, is interrupted; but though the ground of the hypocrite's joy continue full in his view, though he still fancy himself interested in the Divine favour,—his happiness vanishes. What formerly mightily affected him when it was new, now grown familiar, ceases to communicate pleasure. I shall only farther remark, that true religious pleasure uniformly deepens humility; whereas, by means of his carelessness and shortlived joy, the hypocrite is vainly puffed up in his fleshly mind.

I am persuaded, my dear friend, that you have the witness in yourself, that Wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and that all her paths are peace. Indeed, how can it be otherwise, from the very nature of genuine religion! What is true religion, but the knowledge of the only

true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent ? And is it not pleasant to know truth, divine truth, certain truth, truth full of grace, all-important, saving truth,—truth respecting God's perfections, the covenant of grace, the person, atonement, grace, benefits, and laws of Jesus: The happiness of angels is increased with the increase of their knowledge of these divine mysteries. Into these things they desire to look.—Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun ; but a thousand times more sweet, a thousand times more pleasant, is the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to the enlightened mind. As the honeycomb is sweet to the taste, so is the knowledge of wisdom to the soul. The transports of the ancient mathematician, on discovering the solution of a problem which had long puzzled him, were perhaps excessive ; but what joy can be too great in obtaining that knowledge of God and his Son, which is eternal life ! What is more agreeable than rest, and especially rest in God ! and this is the scriptural account of religion. We who believe, do enter into rest. “ Return unto thy rest, O my soul.”—While in a state of guilt and depravity, we are and must be restless ; but in the covenant, blood, fulness, promise, and grace of Christ, we find rest in all the delightful extent of that word,—rest from the perplexities of doubt, from the agonies of remorse, from the turbulence of passion, from the anxieties of desire, and from the forebodings of fear,—rest for the understanding, conscience, and heart. This is the rest, and this is the refreshing ! Delighting ourselves in God, we get the desire of our heart ! Is it agreeable for a son to enjoy the company of an affectionate father ? Religion is a drawing near to our Father who is in heaven. To come as a petitioner to a prince, is a privilege ; but to come to God as a Father is a peculiar pleasure, and this pleasure have all the saints. They come boldly to the throne of grace,—they have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father.

They are enabled to view God as a Father who dearly loves them ; and even when they wander from his way, they hear his voice bemoaning their departure, and it melts their heart into penitence, and sweetly constrains them to turn their feet into the ways of his testimonies. “ Is Ephraim my dear son ? Is he a pleasant child ? for since I spoke against him, I do earnestly remember him still.”

Is it pleasant to be free of care ? Religion is a casting all our care on God, knowing that he careth for us. Cares of various kinds are apt to prey upon our spirits, and make us unhappy ; but when they are rolled over on Him who is infinitely wise, faithful, powerful, and kind, the heart is kept in perfect peace. Is it agreeable to engage in thanksgiving and praise ? Then religion must be pleasant, for to be religious is to make a business of praise. It is little or no pleasure to praise him whom none of the wise or good praise ; but in praising God we concur with the angels, and spirits of just men made perfect, around the throne :—surely then it is sweet to join our feeble voices with those of the redeemed, “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never be forgetful of his benefits.—To Him that loved us, and that washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory for ever.” There is little pleasure in praising one who does not regard our praises ; but with delight may we offer praise continually, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased, and dwelleth in the praises of Israel. Never let us forget that religion is just a praising God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house ; they will be still praising thee. We are made Christians for this very purpose, that we may praise him : “ This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.” Can it be but delightful to have communion with God in love, grace, and consolation ?—and this is of the very essence of religion : “ Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his

Son Jesus Christ." We have full liberty to lay open our wants, that he may supply them: "Out of his fulness we receive, and grace for grace." While our appetites and passions continue unruly, there can be no true happiness; but religion eradicates these roots of bitterness. By the faith of Jesus' person and grace, these Canaanites, which were as thorns in our sides, and briars in our eyes, are slain, and we enjoy the promised inheritance in peace.

To be religious, is to dwell in love with God and men; and surely it must be pleasant to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. To be religious, is to maintain a prospect of glory. The Christian sets his affections on things above,—looks for the blessed hope,—and hopes for the grace which is to be brought to him at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Heaven is the Christian's home. It is the source of his comforts, and the centre of his affections. He knows, that with Christ, heaven and all its glories are freely offered to him in the Gospel; he claims the promise, and hopes for its accomplishment. How delightful to look forward to the period when they, as the ransomed of the Lord, shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy on their heads,—when they shall receive joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. O may this happiness be ours.

It is a very instructive view that is given us of the happiness of the saint, when we are told that wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and that all her paths are peace. It may not be without its advantages both to you and me, my friend, shortly to attend to the various aspects in which this figurative expression leads us to contemplate the pleasures of religion. The path of religion is a pleasant path, for the saint is furnished with all necessary strength to walk in it. To the weak and debilitated, no path is pleasant; but the saint is strengthened with all strength inwardly. The promise is ful-

filled, "I will strengthen them in myself, and they shall walk up and down in my name: My grace shall be sufficient for thee, and my strength shall be perfected in weakness." When he cries, God answers him, and strengthens him with strength in his soul.

Every traveller knows, that much of the pleasure or of the pain of a journey depends on the character of his companions. There are men so rude, so quarrelsome, and so profane, that no enjoyment which the finest scenery can communicate, can compensate for the pain occasioned by their conversation; and, on the other hand, some men are so remarkable for the suavity of their manners, that their society makes us forget many inconveniences, and converts a toil into an enjoyment. He who walks in the way of religion, may assure himself of the best companions. This path is by no means so much frequented as that which leads to destruction; but if the society be small, it is select. They are the excellent ones of the earth,—they are the favourites of Heaven. The greater part of them are poor in this world, but they are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. Many of them have little worldly science or wisdom, but they are all learned in the Bible,—they are all wise for eternity. Many of them are despised by their fellow mortals, but they are all kings and priests unto God, even their Father, and they shall reign with him for ever and ever. They are kind even to those who will not accompany them;—but they love one another with a pure heart fervently. In conversing with them, the toils and labours of the way (for it has its toils and labours) are soothed, and sometimes almost forgotten. But the Christian traveller has other and better companions than the eye of man can discern. A powerful though unseen guard of angels continually surrounds him. "The angel of the Lord encamps around them that fear him, and delivers them. Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall

be heirs of salvation?" These, like the cloud which accompanied the Israelites, move with all their motions, and rest with all their restings.—But the Christian has a far nobler and far better companion than either saints or angels:—Jehovah—God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (I speak it with reverence), is the Christian's companion. All good men, as well as Enoch, "walk with God." His unseen presence accompanies them through life,—nor does it leave them at death; yea, when they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, God is with them; his rod and his staff support their steps. Listen to his gracious declarations; my friend, realize them by faith, and let gratitude and joy take possession of your heart—"Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.—Be strong and of good courage, for it is the Lord that doth go before thee, and he shall be with thee, he will never leave thee nor forsake thee."—Jesus is the Christian's companion. His bodily presence we cannot now have, but he who cannot lie, whose name is the Faithful and the True Witness, hath said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Our Lord himself when on earth walked in the way of religion. As Cæsar was accustomed to say to his soldiers, "not Go, but Come," so may our Lord say to his own people, "Come with me from Lebanon," &c.—The Holy Spirit also is the saint's companion; he is in him, he dwells in him, and he will be with him for ever.

The goodness of the way of religion is farther apparent, from the excellence of the accommodations which the spiritual traveller is furnished with. Their path lies through a dark world, but the Sun of righteousness shines on them, the light of God's countenance is lifted up on them, and they prosecute their journey in security and in peace. God has appointed a variety of

holy institutions, through the medium of which he communicates to them every blessing of which they stand in need—strength in the hour of weakness, defence in the hour of danger, and consolation in the hour of sorrow. He brings them often to his banqueting-house, and his banner over them is love. They have meat to eat of which the world does not know, they are clothed with the garment of salvation, and they drink of a stream of consolation always abundant and always refreshing, whose sources are in the better country—flowing from beneath the throne of God and the Lamb. “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them, who, passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools: they go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.”

The path in which the Christian walks is a well-tracked, a clearly-defined path, and this contributes to its pleasantness. Patriarchs and prophets have in this way found peace to their souls, and in their appointed season arrived safely at their eternal rest. The way of the saint lies through an enemy’s country, by lions’ dens and mountains of leopards; yet still it is pleasant, for God is their refuge and their strength, a very present help in time of trouble.—Jehovah their God is a Man of war—Jehovah is his name. He is a wall of fire around them, defending them from every danger.

Farther, the way of religion is a pleasant path, for he who walks in it has all necessary directions. He has the Book of God, which contains in it a plain chart of the country through which he is passing, and the country to which he is travelling, and the path which he must pursue in journeying from the one to the other. He has the sure word of prophecy, to which he does well in taking heed, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in his heart. He has Christian ministers to assist him in inquiring into the true meaning of the word of God, and

applying it to his peculiar circumstances. But his greatest and his best guide is his God himself. This is his gracious and encouraging language, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."—"The meek will I guide in judgment, and the meek will I teach my way." Faithful is He who thus promises, and he also performs. He gives them his Spirit as a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, who, by shining on the divine word, directs them in all perplexities, and guides them into all the truth.

The pleasantness of the way of religion also appears, from the delightful recollections which our progress suggests. There are no other pursuits which can afford genuine pleasure on retrospect. Some men are so stupidly infatuated, so miserably depraved, that they have a species of enjoyment in retracing in imagination the course of folly or of crime which they have run. But where the conscience is in any degree awakened, such surveys are studiously shunned, and when they are reluctantly made, they occasion the most pungent sorrow. Worldly pursuits afford a miserable review. One looks back and finds his life a blank, full of unmeaning and useless employment. Another casts a glance over the past part of life, and it is one blot,—all inconsideration, crime, and folly. How different are the recollections of the Christian traveller! He is conscious of many imperfections and faults. He knows that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelleth no good thing; and if there is any thing in him that is good, it is the result of the atonement and grace of his Lord and Saviour. Yet, on looking back on the part of his journey which is past, he can say, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wonderful works." As the retrospect in this way is pleasing, still more delightful is the prospect; their eye beholds the King in his beauty,—they see the land which is yet afar off. The

heavenly Jerusalem stands on an eminence, and if the eye of the Christian traveller is not distempered, may be discerned from any part of the path that leads to it :

“ Bright as the sun the sacred city shines !”

What a delightful view does the following passage give us of the pleasure, both of the retrospect and the prospect, which the way of religion affords !—“ I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge will give unto me at that day.” He who used these words, though in a prison, was surely incomparably happier than his imperial persecutor.

In fine, the way of religion must be good and pleasant, for it has a happy termination. It is a trite but a just remark, “ *all is well that ends well.*” Many a journey that seems highly agreeable in the commencement, and even in the progress, ends in disappointment and sorrow. Behold that crowd who tread the flowery path of guilty pleasure. Joy sparkle in their eyes, and from their lips bursts the song of joy and rapture. All is gaiety and mirth ; yet if there is truth in Scripture, their path leads down to the gates of hell,—“ the end of these things is death.” But the path of the Christian ends gloriously : “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace.” The path in which he walks is indeed narrow, but it terminates in the boundless paradise of God. It lies through a waste and a howling wilderness, but it leads to the ever verdant fields of the heavenly Canaan. The palm of victory will soon take the place of the pilgrim’s staff, and the garland of triumph of the helmet of warfare. The feet which now tread on the good way, shall ere long stand on Mount Zion, and tread the streets of the New Jerusalem. Need we wonder, then, that the heavenly travellers should often, amid all their labours, burst forth into a song ! Yea, they do sing in the ways of the Lord.

God's precepts are their songs in the house of their pilgrimage :—

“ They sing along the heavenly road
That leads to Zion's blessed abode ;”

and, when their pilgrimage is finished, they are brought to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They here practise frequently the first notes of that song, which will in due time swell out into the full anthem of Moses and the Lamb.

The pleasures of religion are highly friendly to the growth of holiness. They remove many obstacles, and they suggest strong motives to activity in all the duties of the new life. “ God meeteth him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness.” “ I will run,” says the Psalmist, “ when thou shalt enlarge my heart.” The enjoyment of these divine pleasures stirs up to self-dedication. “ O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thine hand-maid : thou hast loosed my bonds.” It not only excites gratitude, but deepens humility: “ What am I, that thou shouldest have brought me hitherto ?” He who rejoices in Christ Jesus has no confidence in the flesh. It stirs up to Christian penitence. Nothing can give a higher degree of this kind of pleasure, than the assurance that God is pacified to us ; yet we find this represented as connected with the most profound self-abasement :— “ And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord ; that thou mayst remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.”—These pleasures, too, have a tendency to render the pleasure of sin tasteless and disagreeable to us. No one having tasted this wine, desires any other, for he says The old is better.

Should any doubt arise in your mind, as if I had exaggerated the pleasures of religion, allow me to endea-

vour to dispel it by asking a few questions.—Must not that be pleasant indeed, which is pleasant to God? Now “the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him,” and saints are “a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Must not that be pleasant which removes all the causes of doubt and fear, guilt and depravity, restlessness and sorrow?—and an interest in Jesus the Lord, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, does all this. Must not that be pleasant, which is, if I may use the expression, a mutual inbeing in God, who is the sum and substance of excellence and felicity? “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Must not that be pleasant, in order to obtain which, the wisest of men have cheerfully relinquished all worldly enjoyments? Thus Moses “chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season.” Must not that be pleasant, which nothing can induce those who once obtain it to part with? “What have I to do any more with idols?—Let thy hand be on the Man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself. So shall we not go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of Hosts; cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.” Must not that be sweet, in a word, that sweetens every bitter thing, and makes the most disagreeable things delightful? All this religion does: it enables men to glory in tribulation—to triumph in death—and to look forward with confidence to judgment. It is this, and this alone, that can make a person in the agonies of death say, “O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?”—and in the immediate prospect of appearing before the Divine tribunal, “Amen: even so come Lord Jesus.”

But it may be said, Are not self-denial, repentance,

and mortification, essential parts of religion? Are not these disagreeable exercises? and how is this consistent with the above representation of the pleasantness of religion? Allowing that these exercises are in some degree painful, it must be admitted that they are by no means so disagreeable as many sinful passions and habits,—such as, malice, anxiety, fretfulness, murmuring, &c. The ways of transgressors are hard. Besides, there is a pleasure, if I may use the expression, in the root of these religious exercises, however disagreeable to flesh and blood, which ere long shall spring up in solid joy: “Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” Nay, there is a pleasure *in* them, when we are enabled to perform these duties, in some measure, in a proper manner. It is surely pleasant to a gracious soul to find the heart loosed from the bands of wickedness, to obtain a victory over corruption, and to be enabled to resist the attack of the most formidable temptation. Godly sorrow and joy are by no means inconsistent; on the contrary, they are closely connected: True sorrow for sin leads us to look to Jesus as the Saviour from sin, and viewing him in all the perfection of his righteousness and fulness of his grace, “we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we receive the atonement.” While we behold God in Christ pacified to us, we cannot but rejoice, but we also cannot but be ashamed and confounded for all that we have done.

But it may be farther urged in opposition to the above statement, that the people of God are often in heaviness through manifold affliction. — In reply to this objection, I would remark, that, choose what way we will in the world, the storm of trouble blows so hard that it is impossible altogether to escape its violence. Let it be always recollected, however, that it is not religion, but sin that is the cause of these sorrows.—On the contrary, religion gives us peace in the midst of external trouble,

and removes the pains of a guilty conscience, those severest ills to which man is heir. It induces the mind to acquiesce entirely in the disposal of Divine Providence, and makes its votary inwardly happy amid the severest outward distresses: according to the declaration of the Lord, in the world they have tribulation, but in him they have peace. A season of affliction has often been distinguished as a season of comfort. God brings them into the wilderness, and speaks to their hearts. Trials are as it were a thorn hedge surrounding a paradise.

Still farther it may be objected, that genuine Christians are often to be found complaining of doubts and fears, and their temper is the very reverse of cheerfulness.—Here, however, it is necessary to remember, that men are possessed of very different constitutional temperaments, and that religion effects no physical change on its subjects. We find in society bad men naturally cheerful, and good men naturally melancholy. It were certainly very unjust to charge religion with what is the effect of an unhappy peculiarity of bodily frame. It also deserves remark, that the sorrows of the religious often flow from their criminal deviations from the right way. Religion will not make even the religious happy, except when they act a consistent and dutiful part. I believe the mental distresses of good men, where they are not the result of bodily constitution, arise either from their limited or confused notions of divine truth, the instability of their reliance on the atonement and grace of Christ, or their unfaithfulness to their own consciences in acting in opposition or not up to their convictions of duty. The greater part of the apparent difficulty from this quarter will vanish, were a few plain and easy distinctions to be attended to. There must be a difference, as to comfort, between the saint who has fallen into gross sins after his conversion, and his brother who has been enabled to keep clean his garments, between the assured and the doubt-

ing believer ; and there is also a distinction to be made between sensible joy and pleasure, and rooted satisfaction. Solid delight, religious pleasure, like every other thing connected with God and eternity, has a serious aspect ; but it no more on this account deserves the name of melancholy, than the noisy mirth of fools is entitled to the appellation of pleasure.

Your complaints, that you do not yet feel all the pleasure in religion and its exercises which you could wish, do not surprise me. I hope the period is at no great distance, when these complaints shall cease, and when you will join your testimony to that of the cloud of witnesses, to the pleasantness of religion : “Thou hast put more gladness into my heart, than when their corn and their oil abound.” Perhaps, my friend, in seeking after pleasure, you seek it too much, as it were, by the works of the law. When the heavy yoke of the law is mistaken for the easy yoke of Christ, no wonder that men complain.—Besides, you know, you are but a young convert, and the ascent of Mount Zion may be felt laborious by you, who are accustomed to a downward course.

But you ask, What plan shall I fall on, in order to attain these spiritual delights?—With a few remarks in answer to this question, I shall close this long, and I fear, tedious epistle. I lay it down as a first principle, that the soul must be spiritually alive, before it can participate of spiritual pleasure,—there must be a new nature formed, capable of relishing the delights of the ways of God. The natural man is destitute of this capacity. He can no more taste these pleasures, than the blind can relish a beautiful prospect, or the deaf the most harmonious concert of sweet sounds. “They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit,” Rom. viii. 5. By union to Christ Jesus, and the transforming influence of his Spirit, we must be created anew, and rendered morally

capable of divine pleasures. We must not only be indebted to a redeeming God for the capacity, but also for grace to enable us to make a proper use of this capacity. All religious people have this spiritual taste, this capacity of relishing religious pleasures; but this taste is sometimes as it were benumbed, this capacity is not always improved.—Would we wish to be happy, let us, as sinful creatures, receive and rest on the Saviour freely offered to us in the word of grace and promise. It is in this way that we become new creatures, and are enabled to act as new creatures.

I earnestly beseech you, guard against every tendency to melancholy. Melancholy is not only the saint's enemy, as it deprives him of his pleasures; it is the enemy of the Saviour, as it tends to deprive him of his honour. For a Christian to indulge in this habit, is to say by implication, that Christ is not a Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is not a Comforter. It is, though unintentionally, to calumniate the one, and grieve the other. It is to act in direct opposition to the express command of God: "Rejoice ever more. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." It unfits us for duty, and it greatly discourages those who are asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

Beware of attempting to draw your chief pleasure from any other source,—from wealth, honour, kind relatives, or any similar quarter. The pleasures which these can yield, are not fitted to answer the boundless desires of the immortal mind. Solomon enjoyed them in number, variety, and abundance, in a degree altogether unparalleled; and yet let us hear his estimate of them: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity and vexation of spirit." They are low in their nature, and soon pall upon the taste. Besides, they are exceedingly uncertain. They who enjoy them, and who have no better pleasure, are but like Damocles, before whom was spread a table covered with most delicious viands, but above whom was sus-

pended by a single hair a drawn sword. Beware of expecting your chief pleasure from your own acts of obedience to the divine law, as its source. Into this mistake the saint not unfrequently falls, to the great diminution of his comfort. Never rest on your resolutions, your prayers, and your performances, but on the blood of sprinkling, and on the riches of grace. Would you habitually enjoy this Christian pleasure? appropriate a redeeming God, in his persons, perfections, and relations, freely offered to you in the word of the truth of the Gospel. Say, "this God shall be my God for ever." As a guilty creature, come to the blood of sprinkling, and trust in the propitiation which God hath set forth. Endeavour to mortify those corrupt propensities which are the hinderances of your comfort, and the causes of your uneasiness.—You are Christ's; mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts.—Having so exceeding great and precious promises, cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God. Cultivate the acquaintance of the saints of God, especially the better informed and more cheerful part of them. You will find, "as iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a man his friend."—Endeavour to comfort those who are cast down; in watering others you are likely to be watered yourself.—I now bid you farewell, my dear friend, with an earnest prayer that the joy of the Lord may be your strength. Yours most truly.

ASPASIO.

The reader will find much interesting information on the subject of the above letter, in Henry on the Pleasantness of Religion, Boston's Sermons, published at Glasgow, in 2 vols. 8vo. and a Treatise by Dr Colquhoun of Leith, on Christian Comfort.

LETTER VI.

THE LAW OF HOLINESS *.

My Dear Friend,

I EARNESTLY wish you to rejoice in holiness as a great and unspeakable privilege. This is the scriptural view of it; and under this conviction, I cordially agree with a judicious and evangelical divine, in the following sentiments: "When the exercise of grace in the believer, and good works performed by him, are confined to the list of his duties and virtues, and not considered in the first place, as his gracious privileges, and beginnings of eternal life within him, things obtain not their proper place in the system of grace, for grace and good works in the believer are no less than the Holy Spirit working in him both to will and to do God's good pleasure; therefore the exercise of grace and good works in the believer, instead of entitling him to eternal rewards, are a part of the eternal crown and reward put in his possession while yet in the body †." At the same time, we are not to forget that holiness is a duty, and this always supposes a law—the law of God. In the law there is both direction and obligation.—There is a direction, and so it is called a light and a lamp. In this view God deals with us as rational creatures. It also has in its obligation, as an exhibition of the Divine authority;—a regard to this constitutes duty—a disregard to it sin. Let us always

* "The law, in its due place as a covenant leading sinners to Christ, and as a rule of life leading them in Christ, tends to promote real godliness; but when it is put out of its due place, it is perverted, and will never produce any thing more like holiness, than a carcass of formal performances, unacceptable to God, in some, and more licentiousness and untenderness in others, as may be observed in the lives of those who so handle the law as to confound it with the gospel: John vii. 19. "Did not Moses give you the law? and yet none of you keepeth the law.'"—*Boston.*

† Arnot's Sermons.

remember, that the law shews us our duty, and binds us to it.

This law must be viewed as a *law of nature*, antecedent to, and disengaged from every covenant-transaction between God and us. In this case, God, as a Creator and absolute Sovereign, imposed it. It was written on man's heart in his creation, a knowledge of its requisitions and obligations, and full power to fulfil it, being included in the enstamped image of God in which man was created, Gen. i. 26, 27. It contained no positive precept, but obliged all its subjects to believe whatever God should reveal, and perform whatever He should require. The subjects, the persons under it, not being confirmed in holiness, it implied a sanction of infinite punishment to every transgressor, as the due reward of his sin: "The wages of sin is death," says God. The most perfect obedience of innocent man having no proper merit before God, especially of eternal happiness, it implied no promise of any such reward, and it did not admit of any thing less than perfect obedience.

The same law is likewise to be considered as a *covenant of works*, under which we are all by nature. In this form an absolute God, condescending to form a friendship, and to make alliance with a holy and perfect man, was the author of it. It included not only all the commands of the law, but also some positive institutions respecting the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life, and this in order to try man's obedience. It not only denounced infinite punishment against every transgressor of it, Gal. iii. 10; but also promised eternal life to the perfect fulfiller, Matt. xix. 17. It binds mankind, not only as authoritatively imposed by God their Sovereign, but also as accepted by themselves, in their own self-engagement to fulfil it. The original scope and end of it was, that man might obtain eternal life by his own obedience as its condition. It admits not of God's accepting any obedience but that which is abso-

lutely perfect, answerable to all its demands ; so the accepting the fulfiller's person depended on the accepting his obedience. In consequence of God's making the law-covenant with Adam, all his descendants while in their natural state are under it, even though, as hearers of the Gospel, they be under the external dispensation of the covenant of grace ; but all true believers are what the Scripture calls dead to the law-covenant. This is a matter of great moment, and has a great influence on holiness. It is the peculiar privilege of the Lord's people. +

With respect to this subject there are two opinions among men equally contrary to God's word and to one another.—The one of the *legalist*, that believers are under the law even as it is the covenant of works ; the other of the *Antinomian*, that believers are not all under the law, no, not as it is a rule of life. Between these extremes, both of them destructive of holiness and gospel-obedience, I wish to hold, with orthodox divines, the middle path, asserting that believers are most certainly under the law as a rule of life, but dead to it, and delivered from it as a covenant of works *.

Believers are dead to this law as to hope. We naturally hope for privileges here and hereafter, on account of our doings, and so we are said to be alive to the law. By nature being married to the law-covenant, as the Scripture speaks, we hope and expect God will pardon and pity us, will answer our prayers, and perform his promises, because we do so and so ; we are good neighbours, we are just in our dealings, and careful in our duties ; we have good hearts and a good life, and therefore hope to be justified and saved for Christ's sake : but the commandment coming, we die as to this hope. Deep and thorough convictions wrought by the Spirit, through x

* See on this important subject, *Death of Legal Hope, Life of Gospel Obedience* by Booth ; *Sermons on Gal. ii. 19.* by Mr R. Erskine, and A. Hall on the same subject : and Dr Colquhoun, in his excellent *Treatise on Law and Gospel*.

the commands and threatenings of this broken law, destroy these hopes, sweep away these refuges of lies, and the man gives up all hope this way.

There is also a death to the broken law as to relation. This is plainly intimated in Rom. iv. 4. "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ;" the relation between this broken law and a believer is dissolved; He is no more obliged to perform obedience to it, as a condition of life, and under pain of death. This law may issue out its hard command to do or die, to one united to Christ as the Lord his righteousness; but he is no more obliged to obey them, than the wife her husband in the grave. The believer may enjoy exceeding great and precious privileges, even eternal life, in the beginning and completion, and all conveyed to him in promises; but is his right and title to these blessings founded on the promise of the covenant of works? No; having never performed any acceptable obedience to the covenant, he cannot share of its reward. The saint while on earth may be afflicted in soul and body; famine, war, pestilence, sickness, and pain may assail his body, yea, his life may be taken away. As to his soul, the wiles and fiery darts of Satan may attack him; God may withdraw, at least partially, his gracious and comfortable influences, and the terrors of God may set themselves in array against him. These are severe trials indeed, but they are not a satisfaction to divine justice, they are no proper punishment to their persons, though they are a chastisement for their sins. I cannot but adopt a pleasant and scriptural sentiment of Mr Ralph Erskine here:

" His love admits no parallel, for why?
At one great draught of love he drank hell dry.
No drop of wrathful gall he left behind,
No dreg to witness that he was unkind*."

The spears are turned into pruning-hooks, these trials

* Gospel Sonnets.

are favourable frowns and healing wounds: Whatever the law as a covenant saith in its command, promise, or curse, it saith to them that are under the law; but nothing to the believer, for there is not a covenant of works between God and him to have any such power.

This relative death to the law is brought about by a saving communion with Jesus, as "the Lord our righteousness," by what the apostle calls the body of Christ. The blessed Redeemer having fulfilled the precept of this law-covenant by the holiness of his human nature and righteous life, and having endured the penalty of it by his sufferings from the womb to the grave, and all not for himself, but in the room of his elect seed, this is fully, freely, and particularly offered to them in the Gospel, as guilty sinners of Adam's posterity; so it is called "the gift of righteousness," and it is said of the person of Jesus in this capacity "God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." When in the moment of conversion, being united to Jesus, they claim him by appropriating faith as the gift of God to them, his righteousness is imputed to them. Thus the law having all its demands, they are set free from it, even as Adam's posterity would have been freed from obedience to *this* law, when once his state of trial had been over. To establish this point, I need only quote the following texts: "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," &c.—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." As this relative change can admit of no degrees, they are wholly and for ever set free from it in point of privilege.—I hope, my friend, you will never forget this great and leading blessing, that a believer is dead to the law as a covenant in its command, promise, and curse.

Though the old covenant frame of the law be quite dissolved to believers, yet we cheerfully maintain, agreeably to the apostle's doctrine, 1 Tim. iv. 8. that godli-

ness hath the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come, there being an infallible connection between godliness and the glorious life in heaven, established by promise in the covenant of grace ; but, in the mean time, it is not our godliness, but the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen, which is the true and only condition upon which that life is promised, and upon which a real Christian in a dying hour will venture to plead for a share in this life.

To this Scriptural view of death to the broken law, it has often been objected, If believers are delivered both from the commanding and condemning power of the law, how are they bound to yield any obedience to it ? To this I would answer, Believers are certainly delivered, as well from the commanding power as from the condemning power of the law, as a *covenant of works*, which requires obedience to it *in order to justification* ; but they are by no means delivered from it as a rule of duty ; for the moral law is the eternal rule of righteousness, a transcript of the Divine perfections, which every true believer is bound to copy after, and to apply to the blood of Jesus for pardon, in so far as he falls short of obeying it. I would further say, the ten commandments, being the substance of the law of nature, a representation of God's image, a beam of his holiness, behoved for ever unalterably to be a rule of life to mankind, in all possible states, conditions, and circumstances. Nothing but the utter destruction of human nature, and its ceasing to be, could divest them of that office, since God is unchangeable in his image and holiness. The dissolving the relation between the law as a covenant and the sinner, is so far from annulling any obligation which lay originally upon believers, as men, to any duty of the law, that, on the contrary, it extends to new duties, or such as were not actual duties before, and it strengthens the old obligations with new ones, and these stronger

than the old. What I call new duties, are such as those which the believer owes to the Mediator, to God under the relation of a Father, to the Holy Spirit as a Comforter under trials, and to fellow-believers as brethren ; whence the strongest obligations are laid on them to fulfil the law of Christ.

Besides the death as to hope, and the relative death to the law as a covenant, which I have mentioned, there is a death as to affection. This seems to be chiefly spoken of in that saying, Gal. ii. 19. "I through the law am dead to the law." In the best of the children of God while on earth, there are remains of the legal temper and disposition ; they are never free of it in their best duties, yea, sometimes their services smell rank of it, as if they were alive to the law. Are they not too often ready to be lifted up, when they apprehend themselves in a good frame ? Are they not as ready to be cast down in a bad frame ? When they do not find those enlargements in duty they have sometimes experienced, why is their peace so often disturbed ? Is not this too like putting their frames and attainments in the room of Christ's righteousness, and taking that encouragement from these which they ought only to draw from the person of Jesus as the Lord their righteousness, given to them as guilty sinners in the word of grace and promise ?

You may be apt to say, How is this death brought about ? I reply, that under the almighty influence of the Spirit, they are enabled to apply the atonement to their legal guilty consciences, to appropriate the riches of grace, and to see the spirituality of the law ; and thus they die in affection to the law as a covenant, and say, "In the Lord have I righteousness, and God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The nature of this legal disposition is pleasantly illustrated by Mr Toplady, by the following remarkable anecdote :—"Sir James Thornhill was the person who finished the inside of the Cupola of St Paul's, London. After

having finished one of the compartments, he stepped back gradually to see how it would look at a distance. He receded so far (still keeping his eye intently fixed on the painting) that he was got almost to the very edge of the scaffolding without perceiving it; had he continued, half a minute would have completed his destruction, and he must have fallen to the pavement underneath. A person present, who saw the danger the great artist was in, had the presence of mind suddenly to snatch up one of the brushes, and spoil the painting by rubbing it all over. Sir James, transported with rage, sprung forward to save the remainder of the piece; but his rage was soon turned into thanks: ‘Sir, by spoiling the painting, I have saved the life of the painter; you was advanced to the extremity of the scaffold without knowing it; I had therefore no other method of retrieving you, but acting as I did.’” —Similar, if I may so speak, is the method of God’s dealing with his people; we are all naturally fond of our own legal performances; we admire them to our ruin, unless the Holy Spirit retrieve us from our folly. This he does by marring (as it were) our best works, *i. e.* by shewing us their insufficiency to justify us before God. When we are truly taught of God, we thank him for his grace, instead of being angry at having our idols defaced. The only way by which we can be saved from everlasting destruction, is by being made to see, that by the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified.”—*This* death admits of degrees, is not alike in all believers, and is perfect in none till the death of the body. To use the words of an excellent divine, “sometimes the Lord, for their correction, trial, and increase of faith, suffers the dead husband, the covenant of works, to come in upon their souls and make demands upon them, to command, threaten, and affright them, as if they were alive to it, and it to them.” My friend, you will find it one of the hardest pieces of practical religion, to be dead to the law in such cases. Should this be thy case, should

the law enter thy conscience, and make high demands on thee for thy salvation; should it say, Thou art a sinner, and justice must be satisfied, flee by faith to Jesus as the Lord thy righteousness, hide thyself in the wounds of the Redeemer, plead the satisfaction of his death and sufferings, and hold them betwixt you and the fiery law, so shall you stop its mouth. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness, then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom," Job xxxiii. 23, 24. Again, is the demand, Thou canst not have a right to heaven, without working for it works perfectly good, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10, by faith let us lay hold on the perfect obedience to all the ten commandments of our blessed Redeemer, plead that as our security, and then we will be safe: "For to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Should the law yet insist, and say, But thy nature is corrupt and stained; by faith flee to, and plead the holiness of Christ's birth and nature, by virtue of which imputed to thee, thou art, as to thy state, without spot before the throne of God, Song iv. 5.

Death to this law is of the greatest importance with respect to our holiness of heart and life, for, while a person is under the broken law, he is under the power of sin, and cannot be otherwise, for the law as a covenant is the strength of sin. The soul under the law as a covenant is without strength, and therefore cannot serve God in a holy and acceptable manner: and the law, being weak through the flesh, is as unable to sanctify as to justify. He who is under the law as a covenant, is without Christ, in whom alone quickening and sanctifying grace is to be found. The man who is under the law as a covenant of

works, has no principle of holiness in him, and withal, he has no promise of sanctification by that law.

You may be ready now to ask, Is the law as a covenant of no use to believers? I answer, it is of much advantage every way:—hereby we see in the brightest colours, the evil and bitterness of sin, and the danger we have escaped from—a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; we see the infinite value of Jesus' atonement, and the efficacy of his spirit; we see the exceeding riches of his grace, in delivering us from so great a death; and the view of what we are delivered from in the curse, will stir up to the greater fervour and activity in the work of faith, and labour of love.

My dear Friend, make sure that you are actually dead to the law as a covenant, by a renewed reception of Jesus, the Lord our righteousness, given to you as a guilty sinner in the word of grace. Pause and think of the boundless stores of joy unspeakable and full of glory, which open on the distressed conscience, as soon as it perceives its freedom from the broken law, and its standing in the grace of God. Such are blessed of the Lord indeed; and made the righteousness of God in Christ, they shall eternally bask under the propitious beams of the Divine favour. The belief of this privilege causes us to rejoice amidst our hardest conflicts with the body of sin and death; and hereby we are advanced, even while in this howling wilderness, "to reign in life."

I hope my friend will always discard legal doctrines, so dishonourable to God and ruinous to men. Such are the following: "Men may get the grace of God, to enable them to work out a justifying righteousness for themselves; they may hope, by their own diligence and good services, to move God to pity them, and grant them the blessing of sanctification; men are justified, not by the righteousness of Christ, but he has new-modelled the divine law, and reduced its rigorous demands, so we expect to be justified by what is called sincere obedience to this

new law of the Gospel; when faith is made our justifying obedience, we may at least depend partly on our own righteousness, and partly on the righteousness of Jesus; we should not close with Christ by faith till we have certain qualifications to give us a right to believe." These are soul-ruining doctrines: I hope you will utterly discard these principles, and, in opposition to them, hold fast the pure gospel doctrines. I need scarcely say, that all scriptural doctrines are evangelical doctrines. Among them I mention the following:—justification through the obedience and death of Jesus, gifted to sinners and received by faith;—the office of Jesus as the Saviour of the world;—the free offer of Christ and his blessings to sinners as such;—the nature of faith as a receiving and resting on Christ for salvation,—Christ the *all* of holiness and comfort. Let us receive these gospel truths on divine authority, in faith and love, lay them up in our hearts as God's ordinance for destroying our legal temper and making us holy.

I hope you will prize the new covenant into which you are brought, and say of it, It is all my salvation and all my desire. More and more entertain suitable thoughts, and these are high ones, of this blessed transaction; of the second Adam, our glorious Emmanuel, the head, surety, and messenger of the covenant,—of the gospel, the proclamation of the covenant,—of the Bible, the record of the covenant—of the promises, privileges, and laws of the covenant. To help you to this, lay the volume of the two covenants before you, carefully read the first and compare it with the second, and look at its glory and your own happiness.

Further, I may advise, beware of the legal temper which prevails in all. There is a disposition in the best which they must strive against, to deal with God in the way of giving so much duty for so much grace and favour. It is manifested in different ways. We shew a legal temper when our comfort is less or more according to

our frame ; whereas an evangelical temper of soul, would lead us to rejoice, even when the changeable frame is gone, while the unchangeable covenant remains ;—when our assurance is always lost by challenges of conscience,—
+ when a believer is under excessive discouragement, and has no ease of mind, but when about religious duties, &c. A master of Israel, an eminent minister and Christian, laments over this in the following words : “ I do freely own, that ever since I knew any thing of Christianity, I never found greater difficulty in any thing, than to bring down my heart to fall in with the order of the new covenant, first privilege and then duty. After the soul is, as to the main, brought to acquiesce in this new method of salvation, there is so much of the legal spirit in us, leading us back to Adam’s covenant, to expect mercy, even grace and glory, on the score of something wrought in us or done by us ; and our words, who are ministers, do many times betray the legality of our heart, which I speak not in the way of reflection on others, but from my own sad experience.”

Consider yourself as dead to the law as a covenant. This is both your privilege and your duty. Judge yourself to be dead to the law in regard to your hopes. Has the God and Father of our Lord Jesus begotten you again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead ? does it, in its pleasant expectations, grasp all that is good in the way to heaven, and also the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away ? And is this good hope both produced and supported through the riches of sovereign grace reigning through the righteousness of Jesus ? Then it becomes us to regulate all our hopes by the grace of God, and not by the works of the law. Begin not to say in your heart, If I was more holy, or could see some reason to think better of myself, I could hope in God with greater confidence. This would be to hope according to the law, and not according to the riches of that grace which bring-

eth salvation. When you are enabled to walk before God, with any comfortable measure of integrity, do not expect a meritorious reward of such services; rather bless God for such a holy walk, as the fruit of his all-sufficient grace, and as an important branch of your salvation in Christ. But if iniquities prevail against you, if you find nothing in your breast but trouble and anguish, remember that you are called, in this view of yourself, to "hope against hope," to cry to God out of the deeps, and to build your expectations of pardon and relief, on the righteousness and strength of the exalted Saviour. xx

Again, judge yourself to be dead to the law in point of legal fear. Is it your privilege to be really dead to the law covenant? Then surely it is both your interest and duty to honour our Redeemer, and adorn your holy calling, by serving God, without slavish fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of your life. When our hearts meditate terror on account of our manifold transgressions of the law, on account of the criminal defects of our religious duties, and in a certain prospect of a judgment to come, let our souls rejoice in believing that the Christ of God is the propitiation for our sins.—Should you be afflicted with distressing apprehensions of divine desertion and displeasure, yea even of destruction from the Lord as your deserved portion, consider that this must be your infirmity, because God, who has reconciled you to himself by the death of his Son, is supremely glorified, and for ever delights, in the law-magnifying righteousness of your glorious Surety. Our Lord Jesus intervenes between us and all danger, and therefore dismiss your anxious fears, and stir up yourself to resist and repel them steadfastly, in the faith of your liberty by Jesus Christ, who, having redeemed you to God by his blood, will preserve you from all evil, and bring you safely to your Father's house. x

I would now observe to you, that the law of God may be viewed as *a rule*, or the law of Christ to believers.

This is the rule of our holiness. In this form, 1. It has all the authority of God as a Creator and Sovereign, as well as a Redeemer, giving to it binding force. His nature being absolutely irreconcilable to every thing sinful, his law, as a transcript of his holiness, cannot change, and must still retain its original obligation. 2. It proceeds immediately from Jesus Christ, God-man Mediator, and from God as our Creator and Sovereign, as reconciled and dwelling in him. 3. Its precepts are the very same with those of the covenant of works, and demand the same perfection of obedience. 4. The subjects of it, being fully and irrevocably instated in the favour of God, and secured of eternal life in Christ, it has no sanction of judicial rewards or punishments; but while their condition, temper, and practice, are changeable as on earth, it is enforced with a sanction of gracious rewards, of much freedom from spiritual distress and much spiritual fellowship with God, and correspondent degrees of glory, annexed to their obedience, and of fatherly chastisement annexed to their disobedience, which sanctions correspond with the spiritual condition of believers, and are founded on their happy new covenant state. 5. God's end in giving the law as a rule of life, is not that men, by their obedience to it, may procure his favour as a Judge, and a title to eternal life; but to direct, bind, and excite believers in Christ to improve their full and irrevocable justification, and begun possession of eternal life, in cordial gratitude to him, and in preparation for complete salvation; so that their obedience, in the highest view, is a part of their happiness here, as well as it will be in heaven. 6. It supposes all its subjects to have already full strength, motives, and encouragements in Christ; and though it requires perfect obedience, it admits of God's accepting an imperfect obedience of faith, not to found any acceptance of our persons, but as a fruit of their being united to, and fully accepted in Christ. 7. All believers, and they only, are the subjects of this law

of Christ; it binds them always, both under the ceremonial law and the prophets, and when our Lord and his apostles inculcated it with additional motives and enforcements. The relation of believers to Christ, and to God in him as their husband, father, friend, and pattern, requires its continued obligation and all the new covenant blessings of union with Christ, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, spiritual comfort, and eternal glorification, require their continued subjection to it.

In this department you will observe that I speak nothing of a remedial law, requiring faith and repentance, and sincere obedience, as conditions of our justification. This appears to me a dangerous innovation,—a confounding holiness and justification together. It destroys the perfection of the law, and subverts the sovereignty of divine grace in the gospel at one stroke*. That this blessed law, as a rule of duty, is still obligatory, will plainly appear. The grounds of it are everlasting. “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and house of bondage.” Because he is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep his commandments. The end of our Lord’s coming, was not to destroy the law, but to establish and fulfil it. He fulfilled it as a covenant *for us*, and he fulfils it *in us* and *by us*, as a rule. Obedience and conformity to the holy law, is one of the greatest ends of our redemption by Christ. Our Lord is the great Mediator through whose hands the law is conveyed to us, and this serves wonderfully to sweeten it to us. He reconciles the law to sinners, and reconciles sinners to the law in Christ. It now becomes a friendly counsellor to direct them in the way of duty, and Christ reconciles the heart of the sinner to the law, insomuch that he delights in the

* The error of this pernicious principle is set in a just and plain light by Mr Hervey in his Dialogues, 7th, 8th, and 9th,—by Mr Richard Taylor in his Establishment of the Law and Gospel, chap. 6th,—and by Maurice, in his Social Religion Exemplified.

law of the Lord after the inward man, and esteems God's commandments concerning all things to be right. This our Lord effectuates by the execution of his several offices: as a prophet, he interprets and opens up the law in its spirituality and purity; as a priest, he covers our obedience by his atonement, and perfumes our services, and procures the acceptance of them, by the sweet incense of his intercession; and as a king, the great God our Saviour, he transmits the law to his subjects with the stamp of his authority. This law Jehovah, as a redeeming God, writes in our heart, and enables us to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments, and do them.

Our obedience must and will proceed on evangelical *principles*. The leading principle of obedience to this form of the law, is faith in Jesus Christ, and hence all true obedience is called the obedience of faith. The spirit of life enters into the dead soul, and works faith, by which it is united to Christ as a head of influence, and we receive out of his fulness, and grace for grace. All the believer's acts of obedience are acts of the life of Christ in them.—This obedience to the holy law, is stimulated by evangelical *motives*,—the consideration of the matchless grace, love, and mercy of God manifested in Christ, the suffering and obedience of Jesus, &c.—It is also influenced by evangelical *affections*; these are love, delight, hatred of sin, real filial fear, and the like. As one fire kindles another, so the love of God and Christ, apprehended by faith, kindles and keeps burning these Christian affections. They destroy the love of self, and beget a ready mind in serving the Lord.—In fine, it is performed to a *gospel end*, which is the honour of Christ, and the glory of God in him. While the natural man acts from himself, and for himself, Jesus is the first principle of the believer's life of holiness, and his last end also.

The general duty of obedience required by the moral law as a rule, is love to God and men. Love to God is

the source of all our obedience to the law, the chief stream or branch of obedience, and the all-comprehending substance of it. We must love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We must love ourselves, in sincerely seeking our own happiness next to the glory of God ; and we must love our neighbour as sincerely and constantly as we do ourselves *.

My dear friend, let us carefully examine ourselves. Are the laws of God written on our hearts, and do we aim habitually at transcribing them in our lives ? Do we approve of the whole law, so far as it is known to us ? Can we say with the Psalmist, “ I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right ? ” Do we find the law condemning many things in us ; but do we leave our complaint upon ourselves, and say, “ The law is holy, and the commandment, holy, just, and good ? ” Have we an inclination of heart toward the *whole* law, so far as we know it ? “ O that all my ways were directed to keep thy statutes ! ” Is there in us a fixed principle, which lies the same way with the holy law, bending away from what the law forbids, and toward what the law directs ? Do we habitually endeavour to conform in our practice to the holy law ? “ Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy commandments.” A sanctified heart will certainly make a holy life ; the grace of God will enable us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.— On the whole, do our souls lie open to what of Christ’s laws we know not ? do we say, “ Teach us thy statutes ? ” do we say, “ That which I see not, teach thou me ; search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” My dear friend, I hope you, in all these instances, kindly and impartially consent to the law, that it is good. I trust you imitate the

* See an excellent Explication of the Moral Law, in Westminster Larger Catechism, and in Boston’s Body of Divinity.

learned and holy Dr Cotton Mather, in his regard to God's holy law: "I find," says he, "that not only my understanding sees, but my will chooses the great God as my best good, and as my last end; that I do mourn under, and strive against my own coldness; and endeavour to stir up myself to greater zeal and diligence in this matter.—I regret, with much detestation, all that has made any separation betwixt the Lord and my soul. Sin is that accursed thing, therefore I lament it, I abhor it, I labour to avoid it. My heart is insatiably pressing after the highest attainments of religion. My respect unto the commandments of God is universal. Let a precept be never so difficult to obey, or never so distasteful to flesh and blood, yet if I see it is God's command, my soul says it is right, let me obey it till I die.—'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity;' for let my own iniquity assail me with never so much violence, I never give up the combat. If I am foiled, I mourn; if I am humbled, I am grieved exceedingly, and keep crying to heaven for help, and I am resolved to do so, while I have a day to live; therefore, bless the Lord, O my soul." And to set a still superior pattern before you, I hope you will say with David, "Thy law is pure, therefore thy servant loveth it; therefore I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold; therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way."—I may conclude this letter with saying, Let us carefully study the wide, but little perceived, difference between the law of God as a covenant, and as a rule of life in the hand of Christ. Without distinct experimental knowledge of this, we can neither rightly discern nor practise the truth as it is in Jesus.

Farther, agreeably to this holy law as a rule, be truly strict in the faith, and a holy life. Let every truth be dear to you. Be strict in inquiring into sin and duty in particular cases. Act in all things by a religious prin-

ciple. In doubtful practices, wherein you are not clear, choose always the side safest for conscience. Be conscientious in the relational duties to God and men. Be the same in secret as in public. Be a strict observer of your own heart and life.

Use the law evangelically. Now, if you would do so, begin as the preface directs you, *Keep the commandments of thy God*. Attempt not obedience to it in your own strength. Under the covenant of works we were to obey by the strength of inherent grace, but now we are called to lay hold on Christ as our strength, and obey by the strength of derived grace assisting us. Let us not seek peace by our obedience and sanctity. When we have done all we can even through grace, we must go from our own to the obedience of Jesus for peace. If we would use the law evangelically, let not the duty the law requires, nor the discovery the law makes, hinder us from embracing the offer the gospel makes; and, in one word, if we would use the law in a gospel manner, let us never look to the law as a fountain of justification, nor yet as a fountain of strength, but only as a standard of duty; and therefore, let us make a constant journey between our Lord Jesus and the law, looking to him for righteousness and strength, who is the fountain of both.

I further add, never think you can effectually incline your heart to the immediate practice of duty by any practical principles, as do only serve to bind, press, and urge you to the performance of duties; but rather let such principles, the authority of God, his all-seeing eye, stir you up to go to Christ by faith, that you may be effectually stirred up to the immediate practice of holiness, to come to Christ for the new holy heart and life, and all sanctifying influences, that strengthen and enable as well as oblige us thereto. Never think of obeying the law for life; this I must often inculcate. You know, I hope this is by no means the method in the law as a rule. Believers in Christ have life already in him, by virtue of his

working perfectly in their room and stead. The truth is, holiness is a main part of that life and salvation we have of Jesus Christ. Of him (of God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is to us sanctification ; and were there more exercise of faith to attain holiness, and less dividing of holiness from life and salvation, making the former the means to procure to ourselves the latter, there would be more true holiness among us.

In performing duty, look not only to the law, but to your encouragement ; yea, look first to your encouragement and privilege, and next to your work ; look to the life, strength, righteousness, and fulness you have given you in Christ, and then be up and doing with the Psalmist, “ I will go in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteousness, even thine only.”—Never force yourself to yield obedience to the law, *in order* to enjoy sensible comfort. Some Christians, when they have lost their evidences of an interest in Christ, and would fain recover them, they press themselves to yield obedience without *believing*, till once, by their obedience, they have *recovered the evidence of their having faith*. When I give you, my dear Theron, this advice, I by no means favour *laxness*, but wish you to guard against beginning our work at the wrong end, and so labouring in vain, for obeying must always spring from believing, since without faith it is impossible to please God.

I would advise, as many others have advised in this case, to exercise the direct act of faith, as sinful creatures accepting of Christ offered to us in the gospel. We have a pleasant instance of this, in the experience of a minister lately deceased * :—“ When in my late illness, I was for two days under vast distress of mind, because I had not that assurance of my state which I inclined ; but I think I was helped, as a needy and perishing sinner, to venture for eternity upon the person and righteousness of our adorable Emmanuel, as presented in a faithful word of promise to sin-

* Letter from Mr Campbell, Stirling.

ners as such. In this way I found rest to my soul when I looked for death, and therefore am in no scruple to advise all doubting persons to essay to venture upon the covenant gift and grant, which Jehovah hath made of himself as *our* God, saying, ‘I am the Lord thy God.’”

Set the life of Christ in this world before you; this is really the law embodied. Let this, then, be the *rule* of your conduct. For this purpose, often read the sacred memoirs of the life of Jesus in the Evangelists. Here is a pattern in your nature, and in your circumstances of trial and affliction;—here is a perfect pattern which pleased God. Let this be the *reason* of your conduct, the pattern of the most high God himself in flesh. Let this *endear* duty to you;—“Walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour.”

On the whole, let us always connect our duties to the law with the blood and atonement of Christ. Cast all your tears, prayers, and works into the ocean of Christ’s infinite merit: there dye them in the precious blood of the Lamb, as the martyrs of old did;—they “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb:” in this way they will be accepted in heaven.—I am, in truth, your friend,

ASPASIO.

LETTER VII.

THE DYING SAINT.

Dear Sir,

THE letter you so lately received from our invaluable friend Aspasio *, must have prepared you for the solemn

* The following is the letter referred to:

My Dear Friend,

WITH a trembling hand I take up the pen to write you my last letter. I am plainly dying. A few days—a few hours, perhaps, will terminate

intelligence I am now about to communicate. His anticipations have been fulfilled. Last night the good man was gently dismissed from this world of imperfection and sorrow, and joyfully went home to the better country. It will gratify you to know that his last hours were soothed by the tender assiduities of Christian friendship; but it will, I am convinced, give you a much higher degree of pleasure to learn, that he experienced the unremitting sympathy and support of that heavenly Friend, who alone can enable us to walk, with composure and pleasure, without danger and fear, through the valley of the shadow of death. During the whole course of his illness, he never expressed the slightest degree of dissatisfaction with the conduct of that Providence which was gradually but obviously bringing him to the house appointed for all living. On the contrary, it sensibly hurt and displeased him when any of us hinted a wish, which seemed to oppose in this instance the gracious and holy will of God. He frequently told us, that in no situation were the comforts of the Gospel more necessary than on a deathbed, and that in no situation had he ever experienced them in richer abundance or more powerful efficacy. These consolations

my pilgrimage. I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. You love me, I believe; rejoice, therefore, because I go to the Father. I am dying in the firm faith of those truths about which we have so often conversed and corresponded. I anticipate death with ardent desire, as certainly freeing me from all the remains of indwelling sin. Under these I have long groaned, being burdened. With these I have maintained a constant and painful conflict, but from which all my believing, weeping, praying, and attending divine institutions, could never completely deliver me. O transporting thought! I am about to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. I shall see God as he is, and shall sin no more. Satan attempts to disturb me, but I hope to overcome by the blood of the Lamb. God comforts me with his word exceedingly. Though of late my consolations were small, being straitened in myself, yet now they abound,—they overflow. With this I send you my heart, and its warmest affections and most tender good wishes. It beats languidly, and will soon be still; but while I live, I shall not cease to pray for your abundant happiness. Farewell! we shall meet again, never to part.

Yours dying in the Lord,

ASPASIO.

tions, which are neither few nor small, were wholly drawn from the exhaustless source of evangelical truth. Deeply sensible of his own guilt, depravity, and wretchedness, convinced that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelt no good thing, he often declared, that his comforts were derived, not from his gracious dispositions nor from his holy conduct, but from that everlasting and well-ordered covenant made with Christ Jesus his Surety, revealed to him in the Gospel, and acquiesced and trusted in by faith. In death, as in life, he was "strong in the faith, giving glory to God."

The peculiar intimacy which subsisted for a long period between you and our departed friend, will naturally render you anxious to obtain as particular an account as possible of his conduct and experience in the last and most trying scene ; and in the following part of this letter I shall endeavour to gratify this most allowable curiosity. I the more readily do this, because I wish to imprint deeply on my own mind, the important and pleasing instructions imparted both by his dying words and actions ; anxiously wishing that, when called to die, I may be enabled to be a follower of his faith and patience. I am the better able to furnish you with such an account, as almost from the commencement of his illness, anticipating the probable result, I was in the habit of taking notes of the most remarkable of his sayings.

Immediately on his being seized with the fatal distemper, we proposed to send for medical assistance. To this proposal he readily assented. "I am well satisfied," said he, "that this should be done. I reverence every mean of divine appointment for the recovery of health, though I suppose the end of all things is to me at hand." On his arrival, the physician, after inquiring into the symptoms of his disease, endeavoured to raise his spirits, by giving him hopes of ultimate recovery : "My dear Sir," replied our friend, "do not dissuade me from views of death, nor advise my friends to conceal from me their

fears of my approaching dissolution. Moses, that adept of knowledge, both human and divine, Israel's mighty sovereign, and the man after God's own heart, prayed for impressive views of death; yea, Israel's God represents the consideration of death as the sum of true wisdom. Surely it is not for any to leap into heaven or hell by guess."

You are intimately acquainted with the general tenor of his temper and conduct during life. We are all witnesses how holily, and unblameably, and justly he behaved himself among us. He was an example to the believer in faith, in word, and in charity. The animating spring of all these exertions, you also well know, was a habitual reliance on the Saviour. The life he lived in the flesh was by the faith of the Son of God, as him who loved him, and gave himself for him. It was his daily, his hourly employment, to appropriate Christ and his blessings, freely offered in the Gospel to him as a sinner. It was this which animated him, and strengthened him for the discharge of duty; it was this which supported and comforted him under affliction; and it was this which preserved him composed, and even rendered him triumphant, in the conflict with death,—in the prospect of eternity. He encouraged himself in the Lord as his God, he judged Him faithful; he saw the promises, he was persuaded of them, he embraced them. In the exercise of a firm faith and humble reliance, he often reviewed the glory of Christ's person, and the excellence of his mediation, the obedience he finished, the death he suffered, all the offices he executes, all the relations he sustains, all the promises he has made, all the administrations of his providence, his unchangeable love and almighty power, his unsearchable riches and boundless liberality; fully and delightfully convinced that this great and gracious Saviour was his own, and that, however deficient in himself, he was complete in Christ.

His illness was, as you know, of a lingering nature.

During the wearisome months which were appointed for him, he maintained a constant, patient cheerfulness and resignation. Repeatedly he expressed his feelings in the language of Dr Watts :

“ Oft have I sat in secret sighs,
To feel my flesh decay,
Then groan’d aloud with frightened eyes
To view the tottering clay.

“ But I forbid my sorrows now,
Nor dares the flesh complain.
Diseases bring their profit too,
The joy o’ercomes the pain.

“ My cheerful soul now all the day
Sits waiting here and sings,
Looks through the ruins of her clay,
And practises her wings.”

About the commencement of his last illness he suffered deep mental distress, from perplexing doubts and fears respecting his final salvation. “ I understand,” said he to me one day, with a peculiar solemnity of manner, “ I understand my life is doubtful, and so, I fear, is the salvation of my soul. The promises which used to refresh me communicate no consolation, innumerable evils encompass me, conscience accuses and condemns me, the iniquities of my youth muster themselves in array against me ; with horror I survey my past life, and find a blank or a blot, vanity or wickedness. Satan assaults me, my God forsakes me, he hides his countenance and I am troubled. My hopes of salvation are, I fear, like the hope of the hypocrite, which vanishes when God takes away his soul. I fear God has sworn that I shall never enter into his rest, and that as I am filthy, I must be filthy for ever.”—In this uncomfortable state he continued for some days. But the Lord did not cast off for ever ; though he caused grief, yet had he compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. The promise was in this case the minister of consolation to his heart. He had recourse to the divine word, and there found it writ-

ten, that the Saviour is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. These he recalled to his mind, therefore had he hope. "Precious words!" was he overheard saying, "Delightful assurance! Blessed Lord Jesus, I cast myself down at thy feet, a sinner to the uttermost, needing and begging salvation to the uttermost. I will take hold of the horns of God's altar, the blessed propitiation, and if I perish I will perish here." "I hope," said he afterwards to me, "that the day is dawning and the shadows flying away. I hope I hear the voice of my Beloved, 'For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, I hid me and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the ways of his heart; I have seen his ways, and I will heal him. In a little wrath I hid myself from him for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on him.' This depression of mind is the fruit of unbelief. Blessed be God, who has said, 'I will testify against thee, I am God, even thy God.' Many a time have I attempted to claim him as mine, and I will endeavour to do so still. I feel I cannot be happy without him as my God; and, blessed be his name, I need not be without him for he has said I am the Lord thy God. I now perceive, that though, on account of my spiritual deadness and darkness, I could not produce any evidence of my having claimed him by faith as my God, yet that he, without any reference to faith or any thing else as a condition, performed or to be performed by me, as the foundation of my relation to him, has solemnly and irreversibly declared, I am the Lord thy God; and that this gracious declaration, not my faith, was the ground of my right to claim him as mine; and rather than be without him as my God, and that for ever, I will now, in obedience with his own command, claim him as mine. And when I appear, as I soon must, before his tribunal, I will produce, not my faith, but his own declaration, as a proof that he was God, even my God. I am also fully convinced, that he would never have put this gracious grant of himself into

my hands, unless he had allowed me to accept it, and take the benefit and consolation it is calculated to communicate. I will therefore say, This God shall be my God for ever, and my guide even unto death.'—This holy resolution seemed to remain entirely unshaken during the whole of his illness.

You perhaps know, that it was a common practice with the good Aspasio, to repeat in the hearing of dying Christians the promises of the Gospel, and that he had made out a list of promises peculiarly fitted for this purpose, for his own use and that of his Christian friends. Among these were the following :—Of support under affliction, Lam. iii. 32, "But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies." Heb. xii. 6, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." 2 Cor. iv. 17, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Of pardon, Isa. liii. 5, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." 1 John ii. 1, 2, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous : And he is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." Acts x. 43, "To him gave all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." Of victory over death, Psalm lxxiii. 26, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law : but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Of a happy resurrection, John vi. 40, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life ; and I will raise him up at the last day." 2 Cor. v. 1, "For we know that, if our

earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Rev. vii. 16. 17, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—These promises, which he had so often recommended to others for comfort, he now endeavoured to improve for his own consolation, and he found them exceeding great and precious.

From the nature of our friend's disease, which was, as you know, a pulmonary consumption, he was during the most of his illness able to converse occasionally : and these opportunities he carefully improved, for recommending religion and the Saviour to all around him. Indeed, "his lips dropped like the honeycomb,—honey and milk were under his tongue." Many of his useful and pleasant observations have no doubt been forgotten, but the following have been preserved :—"I have many kind friends," said he, "and many comforts, but oh, what are all the consolations that all the creatures in the universe can afford, in comparison of these grand consolations of our condescending Lord ! 'Ye are my friends,—come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.—The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick ;—there shall be no more sorrow nor death, neither any more pain.'"—In the close of life, as during its course, the most of his time was spent in reading and praying over select passages of Scripture. "Blessed be God," said he on one occasion, "for these precious promises. How sweet unto my taste are all those words of truth ! Blessed be my heavenly Father for his kind attention to my weakness, in communicating his assurances of love and mercy in language so explicit, as that even I in my present debilitated state can easily understand it,

though quite unfit to enter into curious speculation or laboured disquisition." A friend asked him one day, what was now the support of his soul in the prospect of dissolution? He replied with animation, "That precious doctrine which I have so highly esteemed, and have loved since ever I knew the grace of God in truth. Amid all the languors of decaying nature, this is my sovereign support, free justification through Jesus Christ; a comfortable persuasion, that through his atonement he hath removed my sins from me, as far as the east is distant from the west—that he casts them into the midst of the sea, and presents me to himself without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

The obedience, and sufferings, and death of the Saviour, on which he dwelt with so much complacency during life, were his favourite themes to the end. "I thought," said he, "I have known not a little of this precious doctrine, but I am now learning by this affliction what I never before knew so perfectly, I am sure not so feelingly, the value, the efficacy, the infinite merit and conscience-pacifying virtue of the blood of Christ. It would be miserable dying, had we not something every way adequate to the exigencies of the case, on which to build our hopes for eternal salvation. But Jesus's righteousness is a sure foundation. When death, and judgment, and eternity appear in immediate prospect, O how hopeless were our situation but for Jesus! Conscience accuses, the law condemns, the arm of omnipotence appears lifted up to smite the criminal into perdition,—no merit of his own to plead, not one good work to urge, though one good work were enough to secure his salvation, nothing to recommend him to the interposition of the Saviour, What a hell must there be in such a man's conscience, (and such a man am I), were there not a Saviour ready at hand to help him, and had he not full allowance, without any merit on his part, to venture his eternal all on the Lord

his righteousness ! Had I been sent to work out a recommendation of myself to Christ Jesus, I had been undone for ever. The man who should have given me such an advice would have been no messenger of heaven, no interpreter one among a thousand ;—he would have been but a sporter with my misery, he would have but tormented me before the time. Those ministers know not what they do when they send sinful men to the law for life ; the law is become weak through the flesh. It now can only curse and condemn, it never can justify or save the sinner. The precept of this law in all its extent Jesus obeyed, the penalty of this law in all its severity Jesus endured. By a confidence in this righteousness, as set forth in the Gospel, a sinner becomes justified. In this righteousness he, by the constitution of God, becomes righteous, that infinitely glorious righteousness, which shall eternally adorn the only-begotten Son of God. This, this is the doctrine of the Gospel, that there is pardon and righteousness, life and salvation, in Christ for all that come to him ; and that all without exception may come to Christ, since our right to him does not depend on any thing in ourselves, but on the free sovereign promise and offer of Jehovah made to us in the word of the truth of the Gospel. O ! blessed be God for that wonderful expression, “ God who justifieth the ungodly ! ” A divine righteousness,—pardon me, my friends, for dwelling so much on my favourite topic,—a righteousness already wrought out and perfectly finished, and this by the abasement, the ignominy, the pains and sorrows, the cries, the tears, the groans, the blood, the death of our Saviour, of our God, in the fashion of a man, in the form of a slave, of an accursed, condemned criminal ! O how I love and admire this righteousness, as the cause and very matter of justification, not because it affords an excuse or apology for my sins ! It affords no excuse or apology at all ; on the contrary, it renders sin

altogether inexcusable, it furnishes the most powerful motives to, and affords the sole security for, universal holiness."

The energy which the ardour of his spirit threw into his manner exhausted his enfeebled frame, and he was obliged to recline on the couch till he regained strength to proceed. He then resumed: "I love to speak of the righteousness of Jesus. It is the noblest theme in the whole compass of knowledge, human or divine. How numerous, how varied, how valuable, the blessings which have been conferred on God's people since the commencement of time, and which will be conferred on them through the ages of eternity! Who can tell the worth of deliverance from the lowest hell, or the sweetness of those pleasures which are at God's right hand? How innumerable are the sinners of Adam's race who shall be the sharers of these benefits! What is the procuring cause of so many benefits to so many sinners? With an unfaltering tongue I answer,—the righteousness, the surety-righteousness of Jesus Christ. Surely this should be always in our thoughts, often on our tongues. Might not the very stones cry out and reproach my insensibility and ingratitude, if I did not love to talk of this divine, of this precious atonement?"

It was observed by a visitant, that this doctrine was considered by many as unfriendly to the interests of holiness: he replied, "It is an old but unfounded calumny. 'Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.' As the broken law, we provide for its honour, to satisfy both its precept and penalty, the perfect obedience and infinite satisfaction of Jesus,—and as a rule of life, we enforce obedience to it by the most rational, authoritative, and endearing motives. For my own part, I never found any thing like the doctrine of the atonement, cordially believed, effectual for destroying my enmity against God and man, for humbling my pride, for taming my fury, for quenching my lusts, for inflaming my de-

votion, for animating my benevolence. I believe that Jesus, the incarnate God my Saviour, has done all I was bound to perform, and suffered all I was bound to endure. I now would earnestly wish to serve Him who saved me. I would glorify Him before men, who justified me before God. He has delivered me out of the hands of my enemies, and I resolve to serve him without fear in righteousness and holiness all the days of my life."

The propitiation, observed a friend, seems to afford you perfect composure and unspeakable joy. "It does indeed," rejoined he; "I have for the most part a peaceful mind. I have indeed had many disquieting and discouraging hours arising from spiritual causes, but in the believing improvement of the atonement, I enter into rest. This is the rest, and this is the refreshing where-with God has caused my weary heart to rest. I reason thus with myself, Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in the Lord thy righteousness; I shall yet praise him. Why should I yet be disquieted by the consciousness of the transgression which Emmanuel has finished, the sin he has ended, and the iniquity for which he has made reconciliation? Why should I be afraid of the law he has magnified, of the divine justice he has propitiated, of the offended Deity he has reconciled? Why should I be alarmed for the devil whom he has vanquished, for death which he has abolished, or for hell, which he has shut for ever as to his ransomed? I own I am guilty, this is the subject of my deep regret; but I have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the propitiation for my sins. When exposed to the temptations of Satan, I find a sanctuary in Jesus, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. The law of sin in my members often carries me captive, but blessed be God, I have relief in Jesus, who by his atonement has removed the curse, the strength of sin, and crucified my old man with his affections and lusts."

In the many severe afflictive dispensations of Providence, said a friend, with which we know you have been visited, did this doctrine bring relief and consolation to your heart? "It did," answered he with eagerness; "I may say, I am the man who have seen affliction, but my afflictions, viewed in connexion with the cross of Christ, have lost their bitterness. My present pain and weakness I consider as the consequence of God's fatherly love to me. There is not one drop of vindictive wrath in the bitter cup put into my hand; my glorious Surety exhausted this empoisoned draught for me. His sufferings unsting my sufferings, and convert them into blessings. When I firmly believe that he died for me, O how I am supported under all my infirmities, and filled with holy acquiescence in the will of my God. It is not unlikely I am now laid on my deathbed, and it is the blessed atonement which alone supports and comforts me. When I look at myself, I have much reason to fear entering into the unseen state; but when I look at Christ crucified, I see death vanquished, and the unseen world subjected to his power. I feel myself decaying, and know not the hour of my death, but hope I may say, Christ my Surety died for me; and he hath promised to be with me when I go through the valley of the shadow of death, why then should I fear any evil? He hath tasted the wormwood and the gall of death, and therefore dying in him, I hope to say on the best grounds, Surely the bitterness of death is past. I know that my dust must return to the dust in the grave; but my Saviour humbled himself to be buried, and I will cheerfully go and see the place where the Lord lay. Thanks be to God who giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, over afflictions, and death, and the grave. Why should I fear? He was dead but is now alive, and liveth for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death."

You have been much honoured, said one to him, in being

made the instrument of successfully defending the truths of the Gospel, especially the doctrine respecting the meritorious righteousness of the Redeemer. "I confess," said he in reply, "that I was particularly anxious for the illustration of this radical truth, as I had frequently denied and abused it, and as since I knew the grace of God in truth, no doctrine has appeared to me more glorious and useful; and I am glad to think my exertions in the best of causes have not been entirely useless; yet I renounce all these labours, and all my other performances, as absolutely worthless, and desire to rest all my hopes of a happy eternity, as a poor guilty sinner, only on the Lord my righteousness. As for those who deny the doctrine of the atonement, I do not know how it may be with them, but I have nothing to rest on but Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

When a friend remarked to him, that without doubt there were many experiences of the past goodness of God, to which he could now look with pleasure and with comfort; he replied with a considerable emotion, "Yes, I have tasted and seen that God was good. I am sometimes disposed to say, 'I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, from the hill Mizar. Notwithstanding, I would flee from all past experiences to a presently offered Christ, and a presently offered righteousness. On these I wish to depend; this has been my support through life, and I hope it will be so in death, and for ever.'" He informed me, that when alone, his principal pleasure was to meditate on Christ, and that he almost hourly repeated the following heart-reviving verses:—

" This, only this, subdues the fear of death ;
And what is this? Survey the wondrous cure,
And at each step let higher wonder rise!
Pardon for infinite offence, and pardon
By means which shew its value infinite.
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!
With blood divine of Him I made my foe!
Persisted to provoke, though woo'd and awed,

Bless'd and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still !
A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne—
Nor I alone ; a rebel universe ;
My species up in arms, not one exempt.
Yet for the foulest of the foul he died.
Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt,
As if our race were held of highest rank,
And Godhead dearer as more kind to man."

NIGHT THOUGHTS, IV.

In the course of conversation it was remarked, that his recommendation had drawn Marshall on Sanctification out of obscurity, and procured for that treatise the place it deserved in the estimation of the Christian world. "Little wonder," said he, "I recommended that book, it was exceedingly useful under God for leading me into accurate views of divine truth. It lay unperused and almost unopened in my library for a considerable time. At last, by a happy providence, I was led to read it. The instruction, comfort, and spiritual improvement, which I received from that judicious treatise, excite in me a pleasing hope that it may be equally instructive and advantageous to others. Familiar as I have now long been with its contents, I seldom read it without sensible advantage. I have long believed the doctrine of the mystical union between Christ and his people, I saw it to be a scriptural and a very important doctrine ; but I think the consolation it affords, opens upon my mind of late with a degree of evidence which I never before perceived. My favourite Marshall's third and fourth directions have been of much use to me on this subject. An entire new state prepared for sinners in Christ, given by God in the Gospel, to be received and enjoyed by faith, and an actual, present, certain enjoyment of this new state in Christ, resulting immediately on our reception of him—what astonishing truths are these ! Christ's righteousness my righteousness, his death my death, his life my life, his fulness my fulness, his glory my glory ! Indeed, the joy of union with Christ is unspeakable and full of glory. O that it may richly abound in all our souls,

through the power of the Holy Ghost ! My views of the nature and benefits of my union and fellowship with the Son of God, are really better explained by Marshall, than I am capable of doing in my present weakness. My Bible is now, you see, my only book and companion, but that esteemed Author suggests to my meditation the most enriching comforts. Indeed, agreeably to his scriptural doctrine, a Saviour given in the exhibition of divine grace, to be received, appropriated, and depended on by the most guilty sinner, is the very stay of my soul. In this persuasion I see God is just putting his Son, and every gracious benefit and promise into the hand of my faith. When I read or call to mind his promises, I take them as they lie in his word, and assure myself God will perform them to me. I am rationally convinced and experimentally satisfied, that this living by faith glorifies God, abases, annihilates proud self, and brings peace, and joy, and holiness to the soul."

What are your present views, my dear Sir, said I to him one day, in the immediate prospect of eternity ?—"Eternity," replied he, "is to me a solemn, but a delightful, boundless object of pleasing expectation and desire. In the prospect of death and the invisible state, I see no refuge for me but in the sovereignty of divine grace, and in the everlasting righteousness of the Surety of the better covenant. I see no other warrant, nor indeed do I perceive the need of any other, to believe that I shall be saved through grace, that I shall obtain victory over death, and eternal life through Jesus Christ, than the free and faithful offer which God makes to me a sinner, of Jesus Christ, and all good things with him. In the apprehension of these delightful truths, I cheerfully say, Farewell time and all its vanities ; welcome eternity, and all its realities."

Another very favourite theme of conversation with Aspasio during his last illness, was the love of Christ. You well know how eagerly he used to seize every opportunity of enlarging on this interesting subject. This

desire grew in strength to the last. He often exhausted himself in speaking on this topic, and could hardly be persuaded to desist when his strength failed him. "O how sovereignly free," said he, "is the love of a redeeming God! How free in its purpose, how free in its manifestation, how free in its application, how infinitely ardent this love! Before it could reach me, or any one of my guilty race, it had mountains to level, and oceans to dry up. But it came leaping over mountains, and skipping over hills. Many waters could not quench it, neither could the floods drown it. O amazing love of an incarnate God! it is greater to his people than to himself. He loved their life and safety more than his own. He laid down his life for his friends, that they might never die. For men, for me, he parted with all which we account most valuable,—reputation, health, ease, liberty, and life; for us he died ten thousand deaths in one; for us he gave himself an offering for sin; for us he lost the sense of that favour which is life,—of that loving-kindness which is better than life. Truly, O Lord Jesus, thy love was wonderful,—how excellent is thy loving-kindness!

"O unexampled love! so vast, so strong,
 So great, so high, so broad, so deep, so long!
 Can finite thought this ocean huge explore,
 Unconscious of a bottom or a shore?
 His love admits no parallel, for why?
 At one great draught of love he drank hell dry!
 No drop of wrathful gall he left behind,
 No dreg to witness that he was unkind."

R. ERSKINE.

A friend requested him to explain Eph. iii. 19, where the apostle prays that his correspondents may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. "We may know," said he, "that experimentally which we cannot know comprehensively; we may know that in its power and effects, which we cannot comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring, who cannot fathom the depths of ocean,

from whence its waters originally are drawn.”—At another time, after seeming lost in thought, he exclaimed, “O love! almighty love! it melts, it ravishes my heart. O how will I, with ever-growing delight and endless transport, rove through all my Jesus’ labour and his love, the anguish of his cross,—the triumphs of his throne! O why loved he *me*, and gave himself for *me*! Even so, Jesus, so it seemed good in thy sight. And what am I, that I should withstand God? O never turn away thy love from me, for it hath overcome me.”—“The love of Christ,” said he to me one day, “shed abroad in the heart, I find to be the vital principle of true holiness. These amazing riches of divine grace clearly manifested to my understanding, and cordially embraced by my will, render every duty of holiness both practicable and pleasant. Indeed, I have always found them give a heart and hand, will and ability, to the discharge of every duty. O how the confidential reliance on this unspeakable grace purifies the heart, awakens gratitude to our great Benefactor, and enkindles our zeal for promoting his glory! It was this which enabled me to discharge the duties of my station with some degree of fidelity, sincerity, and resolution. If I loved him, it was because he first loved me. His loving-kindness was before mine eyes, therefore I was induced and enabled to walk in his truth. Never, however, my dear friend, did I feel the efficacy of the love of Christ so strong in my heart as at the present hour; and O how seasonable is this manifestation of his loving kindness! Advancing, rapidly advancing, as I feel myself to the eternal world, I have full assurance that, out of love to my soul, he has cast all my sins behind his back into the depths of the sea. Under the influence of this conviction I have no fear of death, for though I am a great sinner, I have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous. Though, while I continue in this vile body, I fear I shall often grieve him, yet is his love

still the same,—a consideration which not only comforts me, but makes me ashamed that ever I should sin against so inconceivably kind a Saviour.”——To a friend who remarked, that grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life, was still his darling topic, he replied, “Yes, here indeed it reigns. There is an uncommon emphasis in the word *reigns*. Grace is discovered in many instances of God’s conduct in creation and providence,—but here it reigns. In the contrivance, acceptance, accomplishment, revelation, grant, imputation, and reception—in each and all of these grace reigns. Here it is manifested with every grand, with every charming accompaniment. It appears like the illustrious Jewish monarch, when seated on his inimitably splendid throne of ivory and of gold, or like the magnificent king, when he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty.”

On entering his chamber one day, we found him in tears.—“These,” said he, “are not the tears of regret at leaving the world, or apprehension at entering into eternity. I am not afraid to die, for I believe my Saviour died for me, and I am desirous to be gone, in order to know and experience all he has procured for me; but I have been thinking on the love of Christ, and on what it led him to do and suffer for me, and I cannot help wondering and lamenting how little I have done for him. I have not been so faithful and so active as I ought to have been, as I might have been in speaking and acting for Christ; this is the cause of my tears.” On hearing a hope expressed, that by the blessing of God accompanying the advice of his skilful physician, he might yet recover, he observed, “If my soul prosper and be in health, I shall be thankful. I have lost all heart to take medicines, for I look for no benefit from them; all but Christ is to me unprofitable. Blessed be God, who for his sake healeth all my spiritual diseases.” When inquiry was made how he had slept during the night—“Indeed,” said he,

my cough has been very troublesome, I can get little rest ; but my unfailing remedy is the love of Christ. I hope under all I am kept from despising the rod of God, and of fainting when I am rebuked of him. I feel the rod, yet the Lord does not inflict one stroke too many or too severe. If he should go on to contend, I hope I will yet be enabled to lay my hand upon my mouth. He then repeated with much apparent pleasure the following lines :

“ In all my troubles, sharp and strong,
My soul to Jesus flies,
My anchor hold is firm in him,
When swelling billows rise.

“ His gospel bears my spirits up ;
A faithful and unchanging God,
Lays the foundation of my hope
In oaths, and promises, and blood.

“ Loud Halleluias sing, my soul,
To thy Redeemer's name!
In joy and sorrow, life and death,
His love is still the same.”

His intimate friend — — —, who was at that time, as he still is, labouring under a lingering and dangerous illness, made him a visit. On his entering the room, he partially raised himself from the sofa. “ Welcome,” said he, “ fellow-afflicted member of Christ Jesus ! let us sit down with dissolution and eternity in view, and encourage one another from the word, the precious word of God. What is formidable in death, which our everlasting Redeemer has not taken away ? Do the pangs of dissolution alarm us ? Should they be very sharp, they cannot be very long ; and our exalted Lord, with whom are the issues of death, knows what dying agonies mean. He has said in the multitude of his mercies, “ Fear thou not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God : I will strengthen thee, yea, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will keep thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness *.” This promise autho-

* Isa. xli. 10.

risers us to say,—“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and staff they comfort me.” Are we afraid to enter into a strange, invisible, unknown world? It is the world into which our Divine Master is gone, where he has prepared everlasting mansions for his people, and he has appointed his angels to conduct us thither. Having such a convoy, what should we dread? and going to our eternal home, where our all-bountiful Redeemer is, why should we be reluctant? Are we dejected on account of what we leave? We leave the worse, to take possession of the better. If we leave our earthly friends, we shall find more lovely and loving companions. We shall be admitted into the innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven? Do we leave the ordinances of religion, which we have attended with much delight; leave the word of God, which has been sweeter to our souls than honey to our mouths? We shall enter into the temple not made with hands, and join in that happy choir, who rest not day nor night, saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” And if our Bible be no more, we shall have all that is promised, we shall behold all that is described therein. If we drop the map of our heavenly Canaan, it will be to take possession of its blissful territories. That city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. O blessed, for ever blessed, be the grace of our God, and the merits of his Christ! We shall exchange the scanty stream for the boundless ocean; and if we no longer pick the first ripe grapes, we shall gather the copious, the abounding, the never-ending vintage. Do we fear the guilt of our innumerable sins? Adored be the inexpressible loving-kindness of God our Saviour, our sins have been punished in the blessed Jesus. He, his own self, bare our sins in

his own body, so that there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Oh that we may be enabled with the apostle to make our boast of this Saviour, and to triumph in this faith! "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather, who is risen again, who sitteth at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Is judgment the thing we fear? To the pardoned sinner it has nothing terrible. The Lord Jesus, who keeps his servants from falling, presents them also faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Observe the sweet expressions, "presents faultless," and "with exceeding joy." Justly, therefore, does the apostle reckon it among the privileges of Christians, that they are come to God the Judge of all: for the Judge is our Friend, the Judge is our Advocate, the Judge is our Propitiation. And is it not a privilege to come to such a Judge, as will not so much as mention our iniquities to us, but condescends to take notice of our poor unworthy services,—who sits on the great tribunal, not to pass the sentence of damnation upon us, but to give us a reward—a reward of free grace and of inconceivable richness?"

To one who inquired at him, What is the only warrant of a sinner's trust in the Saviour? he replied, "You know my views on this subject. I have uniformly declared, since I knew the grace of God in truth, that upon the warrant of the faithful promise and word of grace, the sinner as a sinner, with all his guilt and vileness, may and ought to trust in Christ for eternal life. The apostle clearly declares this. "It is a faithful saying," says he, "and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came to save sinners, of whom I am chief." This "is the beginning" of the Christian's confidence. It cannot originally be built on any thing in or about himself, favourably distinguishing him from other men. His confidence at this time rests upon, his peace, his hope, his joy, are derived

from, the word, and Christ revealed and brought near to him in that word, as an all-sufficient Saviour for the chief of sinners. And “we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” Faith in the promise is not merely the commencement of the Christian’s new life. The whole of it, from beginning to end, is a life of faith upon the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us. And even when matters wear the most alarming aspect with us as in ourselves, the warrant for believing, the ground of our confidence, is the same as formerly,—“Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” There is, I am firmly persuaded, no possible method of having our consciences purged from the guilt which we daily contract, or of obtaining the restoration of that peace and comfort which sin has destroyed, than by renewed reliance on the faithful word, and continuing in the faith grounded and settled. The evidences of grace which we see, or think we see, in ourselves, are continually varying, but the word of grace is for ever settled in the heavens. O what a glorious and encouraging truth! The most just and affecting views of my guilt and depravity, the hardest thoughts about myself, are quite consistent with the most steadfast assured confidence in Christ as the Saviour of sinners—as my Saviour. These sentiments,” said he, “my friends, are not speculative peculiarities of mine. Scripture saints have lived and died in this faith; and I find myself daily shut up to it, as the only method by which I can make progress in holiness, or enjoy any thing like solid satisfaction or peace of mind. Such being my own experience, when I speak to my fellow-sinners of the grounds of their hope before God, I must set before them the one foundation, on which all my own expectations rest.”

On a friend’s observing, that he fondly hoped, that, by the use of restoratives and medicines, his valuable life might yet, under the blessing of Providence, be prolonged, he remarked, “It might be so. These refreshments are

pleasant to nature, and are abundantly more delightful when viewed by faith as the indulgent favours of our heavenly Father, and as bearing their place, though it be an inferior one, among the sure mercies of David. The crazy tabernacle may be propped, but the leprosy having infected it throughout, it must be pulled down : but let us rejoice that we know, that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ; and when obliged to abandon our worldly possessions, we have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us,—an inheritance purchased for us by the blood of Jesus, and prepared by God's own Son, the Heir of all things. This world at best is but a wilderness, a pilgrimage, an absence from the Lord. Should we not look forward, then, with desire and expectation to the heavenly Canaan, the house of our Father, the rest that remaineth for the people of God ? O happy day, when sin shall be expelled, death destroyed, the tempter bruised under our feet, and, what is the sum of all felicity, when the glory of God and the Lamb shall beam forth with such radiant lustre, as shall set the soul at an unchangeable and everlasting distance from every approach to spiritual darkness or death. Till that blessed day break, and the shadows flee away, let us live by faith."

I hinted to him one day, that I conjectured that few circumstances in his affliction would be more difficult to submit to, than suspension from the duties of his public function. " I own," said he, with a placid smile, " that life has one charm less than if I were capacitated for public service. I would wish, however, to resign entirely my soul, body, and situation to the divine disposal ; this is certainly most reasonable, but in some cases it is very difficult. O that this were the habitually predominant temper of my refractory, stubborn heart ! Of this I am fully convinced, that nothing but a persuasion of the love of

God giving me grace and glory, and every other good thing in Christ, can ever produce such submission. My desire is, that God would glorify his name by my life or death, which is the best disposal which God himself can make of me."

A serious Christian, rather under the power of melancholy, said to him, "O, Sir! dying is a great and awful work." "I think so too," replied Aspasio, "and were it not for one stronghold to which I fly for refuge, the thought of death would overwhelm me with terror and confusion. But I trust in Him who destroyed death, and Him that hath the power of death. There is all my salvation. The foundation of my hope is the everlasting covenant, the atoning sacrifice, the blood of sprinkling, Jesus the Saviour, able to save to the uttermost, the living Advocate and Intercessor, all these fully and freely made over to me in the word of grace. On this foundation my soul stands safe and unalarmed, composed and happy in the prospect of the eternal state. The covenant is well-ordered and sure. I am deeply conscious of unnumbered and most aggravated violations of the divine law, both before and since my conversion. I hate myself on account of these, but they do not overturn, they do not shake my confidence; for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. Never have I so clearly seen its efficacy as now. So complete is the atonement, that there remains no more conscience of sin, and hence my expected boldness in the day of God. This is exalted doctrine indeed. How honourable to God! how consolatory to man—to me!"

To one who remarked, that his trouble seemed very severe, he replied, "It is the cup which my Heavenly Father giveth me to drink, and shall I not drink it? May not He do what he will with his own? My worthy friend, Moses Brown, often says, "all the afflictions that a saint is exercised with, are neither too numerous nor too sharp. A great deal of rust requires a rough file." He frequently complained of the prevalence of unbelief. "Is it not

strange," said he, "that after all the explicit and unreserved offers of grace to me, I still often will not, or dare not, rest on Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered to me in the Gospel? Oh that heaven-daring, soul-destructive, sin of unbelief! I find though unbelief be most unreasonable, yet I cannot reason it away. I believe, Lord help thou my unbelief. Oh to be enabled to trust with unsuspecting confidence, the declarations of mercy made to me as a sinful creature!" He frequently recommended a life of faith to his friends, as the only way of being holy, useful, or happy. "The promise of God," said he, "is as it were a bill on the bank of heaven,—a bill under God's own hand,—a bill for treasures of inestimable worth and everlasting duration. Let us be ambitious to honour the word of God, by depending upon it in the most discouraging circumstances. Let our great inquiry be, What hath God promised in his word? I find this life of faith productive of the happiest consequences in my general conduct. When my faith is most firm, my prayers are most fervent, my zeal most ardent, my desires after holiness most earnest, my labours of piety and love most assiduous and persevering. Faith strengthens our hand while we live, and emboldens our heart when we die."

You will know that our departed friend considered the blessed Redeemer as the Sum and Substance of all true religion,—the "ALL IN ALL,"—the sum of all its privileges, graces, duties, and comforts. He found Him to be so in his days of languishing. He repeatedly said to me, "A redeeming Jesus is all in all to me,—so I hope he shall ever be in my esteem. I will count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord! All in my desires;—whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none in all the earth whom I desire beside thee? All in my glorying,—it is my unalterable resolution, In God will I boast all the day. God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the

world. All in my aims ;—whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I will do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to the Father by him.”

An intimate friend one day recalled to his mind, the very different views he once entertained respecting the righteousness of Christ and the other peculiarities of the evangelical system ; observing, that even while he maintained these views, his general deportment was decent and moral, and begging him to explain the difference between his present and his former situation. “ Ah ! ” replied he, “ there is a mighty difference. When I was a mere moral man, I sought something from Christ, and rested on this, but I had no fellowship with Christ himself ; but since the Lord visited me with the love of his chosen, I claim and seek the Lord himself, and I am never satisfied without him, and fellowship with him. When I was a mere moral man, I drew my comforts from my duties, but now I draw my duties from my comforts ; then I first did and then believed, but now I first believe and then do. My duties then did bear my privileges, now my privileges bear my duties. When a mere moral professor of Christianity, whatever I did was for myself, and in my own strength ; but since I began to live by faith, I see my strength only in Christ, and wish to say, I will go on in the strength of the Lord God. My mere morality puffed me up, but grace remarkably humbles me.”

“ Ah ! Sir,” said a dejected Christian, “ how happy are you amid all your distress, strong in faith, lively in hope, warm in love ! but what shall he do who once thought he knew the grace of God in truth, but now feels all dead and dark within ? ” “ Beware,” replied Aspasio, “ of leading a separate life in the strength of your own graces. Remember they are but streams issuing from the fountain of life in Christ, and will quickly dry up if not continually fed by the spring. As the life of the branches is the root of the tree, so our life as new creatures is in Christ. He is the root that bears and quickens

us under spiritual darkness; we should, as sinful and dead creatures, apply to Christ for quickening. Blessed be God for that word, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they who hear shall live."

A friend inquiring, what was the object of his most earnest wish, he answered, "My great wish is to be found in Christ." He dwelt with pleasure on this idea,—"whenever or by whomsoever I am sought, may I be found in Christ. Here let me be found in time and in eternity;—here let me be found by the righteous God, who to all in Christ is the God of peace;—here let me be found of the holy law which has no curse against them who are in Christ;—here let me be found by my own conscience, which is purged from dead works by the blood of Jesus;—here let me be found by the accuser of the brethren, with an answer to all his objections in Jesus Christ that died;—here let me be found by death, over whom I have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;—here let me found at the last day, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in them who believe."

You were frequently, as you may well believe, the subject of his conversation. The fire of friendship was not damped by the languor and pain of his disease. "Commend me," said he, not long before he expired, "commend me most affectionately to my Theron;—tell him how abundant are my comforts, and that all these comforts are founded on the doctrines about which we have written and conversed so much. I hope these doctrines have been savingly useful to him,—to me they have been most instructive, heart-warming, sanctifying, and consolatory. The absolutely perfect atonement of the Redeemer, freely exhibited and offered to me a sinner,—this is the basis of my hope, under the pressure of darkness, in the prospect of death. The more near, and distinct, and impressive awful views I take of the future, the boundless scene that lay before me, the more suitable do

I perceive those doctrines which constitute the grand peculiarity and glory of the gospel, to the character of God and the wants of my guilty perishing soul; and I hope and pray that my dear Theron may hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of his hope, and may be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus."

After recovering from a fit of illness, which seemed from its violence to threaten him with speedy dissolution, he gave me the following account of the state of his mind: "I looked forward into eternity without fear. The support of my soul was the doctrine of grace, conveying the gift and grant of Christ and eternal life to sinful men. On the ground of this I laid claim to these as my own, and in doing this I indeed, believing, entered into rest." During this illness he was often overheard praying. The following petitions was noted down by me: "Heal me, for I have sinned against thee. Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Oh, when wilt thou come to me? visit me, O Lord, with thy salvation. Oh, that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ would strengthen me with all might, according to his glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness! Prosper thy glorious cause: Clothe thy priests with salvation, and let thy saints shout aloud for joy. Do good in thy good pleasure to Zion, build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Let thy way be known upon earth, and thy saving health to all nations. Let the whole earth be filled with thy glory."

He often desired the prayer of his friends, that he might not be left to dishonour his Redeemer in his last moments. Amid all his attainments in holiness and peace, he often groaned under the pressure of remaining sin. Laying his hand on his breast he said, "Oh! if you knew what is here! so much vanity, so many follies, such stupid inattention and odious ingratitude, stubborn irresignation and ungovernable pride, such workings of evil affections, above all, such unreasonable unbelief in the merits of my dear Saviour, and the promises of my God. I can assure you, notwith-

standing all my prayers, all my vigilance, all my endeavours, there is so much unsubdued corruption and remaining sin, as would sink me into despair, and hurry me into distraction, were it not that gracious, that amiable name, The Lord our Righteousness. Thither I fly, O that I could do it with full assurance of faith ! I lately," continued he, " was reading the confession of good Bishop Beveridge, and cannot but say Amen to the following declaration in reference to myself: "I do not only betray the inbred venom of my heart, by poisoning my common actions, but even my most religious performances also with sin. I cannot pray but I sin. I cannot hear or preach a sermon, but I sin. I cannot give alms or receive the sacrament, but I sin. Nay, I cannot so much as confess my sin, but my very confessions are still aggravations of them. My repentance needs to be repented of. My tears need washing, and even the very washing of tears needs still to be washed over again with the blood of the Redeemer."

"I now," said he on another occasion, (the similarity of the subjects makes me notice them together), "I now see the peculiar propriety, and feel the full force of the words of my late excellent friend Dr Doddridge on his deathbed, and I most cordially adopt them in the same solemn situation :—'Though I am not suffered once to lose my hope, yet my confidence is not, that I have lived such a life, or to have served God in this or the other manner. I know of no prayer I ever offered, no service I ever performed, but there has been such a mixture of what was wrong in it, that instead of recommending me to the favour of God, I needed his pardon through Christ for the same. Yea, the best prayer ever I prayed deserved damnation ; yet he hath enabled me with some measure of sincerity to serve him. I have no hope in what I have been or done, yet I am full of confidence ; there is a hope set before me in the gospel. I have fled, I still fly, for refuge to that hope. In Him I trust. In

Him I have strong consolation, and shall assuredly be accepted in the Beloved of my soul*."

About this time Providence brought to his hand a poem written by a Mr Phineas Fletcher, who lived in King James the First's time, with which, notwithstanding the uncouthness of the metre, and the obsolescence of the phraseology, he was very much delighted. The following passages he marked, and very frequently read :

" Christ is a path, if any be misled ;
 He is a robe if any naked be ;
 If any chance to hunger, he is bread ;
 If any be a bondman, He is free !
 If any be but weak, how strong is he !
 To dead men life he is, to sick men health,
 To blind men sight, and to the needy wealth,
 A pleasure without loss, a treasure without stealth."
 " A tree was first the instrument of strife,
 When Eve her soul to sin did prostitute ;
 A tree is now the instrument of life,
 Though ill that trunk and Christ's fair body suit.
 Ah, cursed tree ! and yet, O blessed fruit,
 That death to him, that life to us did give !
 Strange is the cure, when things past cure revive,
 And the Physician dies to make the patient live."

About a week before his death, he said to us with much solemnity, " I now apprehend myself near the close of life, and stand as it were on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view. Perhaps you will be willing to know my sentiments in this awful situation. At such a juncture, the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so likely to be dazzled by the splen-

* It is pleasing to perceive the harmony of good men on this most interesting subject,—the necessity of the atonement as the *sole* ground of confidence before God. To gain this object in a still higher degree, the Editor begs leave to subjoin here the honest and touching testimony of the Author of the Task :

" Since the dear hour which brought me to thy foot,
 And cut up all my follies by the root,
 I never trusted in an arm but thine,
 Nor hoped but in thy righteousness divine.
 My prayers and alms, imperfect and defil'd,
 Were but the feeble efforts of a child ;
 Howe'er performed, it was their brightest part,
 That they proceeded from a grateful heart.
 Cleans'd in thine own all-purifying blood,
 Forgive their evil and accept their good.
 I cast them at thy feet,—my only plea
 Is what it was—dependence upon thee,
 While struggling in the vale of tears below ;
 That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now."

COWPER'S Truth.

dour of worldly objects. I think, then, we are extremely mistaken, and sustain a mighty loss by reading so much, and praying so little. Were I to enjoy Hezekiah's grant, and have fifteen years added to my life, I would be much more frequent in my applications to the throne of grace. I have often read of a person who was often retired, and on his knees, and was remarkable for his frequency and fervency in devotion. On being asked the reason of this so singular behaviour, he replied, 'Because I am sensible I must die.' I assure you I feel the weight of this answer, I see the wisdom of this procedure, and were my span to be lengthened, I would endeavour always to remember the one, and imitate the other. I think also we fail in our duty, and thwart our comfort, by studying God's word no more. I have for my part been too fond of reading every thing elegant and valuable that has been penned in our language, and have been particularly charmed with the historians and poets of antiquity ; but were I to renew my studies, I would take leave of these accomplished triflers, I would resign the delights of modern wit, amusement, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scriptures of truth. I would sit with much assiduity at my divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Christ and him crucified. This is wisdom, whose fruits are peace in life, and consolation in death, and everlasting salvation after death. This I would seek, this I would explore, through the spacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Testaments. In short, I would adopt the resolution of the apostle, give myself unto prayer and to the word. With regard to my public ministry, my chief aim should be to beget in my people's minds, a deep sense of their depraved, guilty, undone, condition, and a clear believing conviction of the all-sufficiency of Christ, by his blood, his righteousness, his intercession, and his Spirit, to save them to the uttermost. I would always observe to labour for them in my closet, as well as in the pulpit, and wrestle in secret supplications, as well as exert my-

self in public preaching, for their spiritual and eternal welfare; for unless God take this work into his own hand, what mortal is sufficient for it? It is not unlikely you may wish to know what is my hope with respect to my future, my immortal state. Truly my hope, my whole hope, is ever in the Lord Redeemer. Should the king of terrors threaten, I flee to the wounds of the slaughtered Lamb, as the trembling dove to the clefts of the rock. Should Satan accuse, I plead the Surety of the covenant, who took my guilt upon himself and bore my sins in his own body on the accursed tree, on purpose that all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Should hell open its jaws, I look to that gracious Being who says, Deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom. Should it be said, No unclean thing can enter heaven, my answer is, "The blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanseth from all sin." Though my sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Should it be added, None can sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb, without a wedding-garment; and your righteousnesses, what are they before the pure law and piercing eye of God but filthy rags? These I renounce, and seek to be found in the Lord my Righteousness. It is written in the word which shall judge the world at the last day, "By his obedience shall many be made righteous;" so that Jesus, the dear, the adorable Jesus, is all my trust; his merits are my staff while I pass through the valley of the shadow of death; his merits are my anchor, when I launch into the boundless ocean of eternity. If the God of glory pleases to take notice of any of my mean endeavours to honour his holy name, it will be infinite condescension and grace; but his Son, his righteousness, and his sufferings, is all my hope and salvation."

Our friend had to make many pauses during this speech, his strength being labour and sorrow. He now gradually became weaker and weaker. He was overheard repeating with apparent delight the following verses:—

“ Happy the company that’s gone
From cross to crown, from thrall to throne;
How loud they sing upon the shore
To which they sail’d in heart before.

“ I long to share the happiness
Of that triumphant throng,
Who swim in seas of boundless bliss,
Eternity along.”

ERSKINE.

“ Saviour divine, I know thy name,
And in that name I trust;
Thou art the Lord my righteousness,
Thou art thy Israel’s boast.
Jesus, I love thy charming name,
’Tis music to my ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud,
That heaven and earth might hear.
I’ll speak the honours of thy name
With my last lab’ring breath,
And dying clasp thee in my arms,
The antidote of death.

DODDRIDGE.

“ How oft have sin and Satan strove
To rend my heart from thee, my God?
But everlasting is thy love,
And Jesus seals it with his blood.
The oath and promise of the Lord
Join to confirm the wondrous grace;
Eternal power perfumes the word,
And fills all heaven with endless praise.
Amidst temptations sharp and strong,
My soul to this dear refuge flies;
Hope is my anchor firm and strong,
When tempests blow and billows rise.”

WATTS.

To a friend he said, in allusion to Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, which lay before him, and which was, you know, always a favourite with him,—“ I am lying by the side of Jordan, happy and at ease, waiting for the order to cross the river. I hope I will not attempt to cross it in the boast of vain confidence, like poor Zealous-Mind. No, my trust is in the blood by which the saints have overcome,—in the righteousness by which they reign in life—in the grace and power of an Almighty Saviour, who hath swallowed up death in victory; and with my trust fixed there, I shall not, I hope, be ashamed nor confounded world without end.”——To the physician, on his last visit, which was but a few hours before he expired, he gave a most correct and impressive exhortation to attend seriously to the important subject of the salvation of the soul. Perceiving dissolution fast approaching, one of his friends inquired if he never felt disposed to say to

himself, "What will I do in the swellings of Jordan?" "I have, no doubt," said he, "an aversion to death as a natural evil, and I am anxious to glorify God in my manner of dying; but my sole dependence is on Jesus, the Lord my Righteousness. The merit of his blood, like Elijah's mantle, shall divide the waters of death, and open up for me a safe and easy passage to the promised land."—An attendant repeated to him that delightful scripture, "This God shall be our God for ever, he shall be our Guide even unto death." "It is most true," said he "and most consolatory;" and pointed to his friend Mr Madan's paraphrase on it, wishing it to be sung in his presence.

" This God is the God we adore,
My faithful unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end.
'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit will guide me safe home;
I'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

His vocal powers were now almost gone, but it was plain he sung along with us, with the spirit and with the understanding.

A little before he expired, collecting the feeble remains of his strength, he bade us most affectionately and solemnly farewell.—"My dear friends," said he, "with whom I have often taken sweet counsel, I am now about to leave you, but I leave you for still better company above. The union between us as Christians cannot be dissolved by death. Being one in Christ, we shall be one for ever. United to him, we cannot be separated from one another. With what sweet eternal thankfulness shall we acknowledge that Christ is all in all! He has been so to us here, he will be so to us for ever. Mourn not that I go to him first; yet a little while, and you will follow in your order. Till then farewell. With joy shall I welcome you to the regions of glory, and conduct you to him whom our souls love. We shall meet no more at ———, but we shall assuredly meet in our Father's house to part no more." After

this he sunk into a state of comparative languor and insensibility.

Partially recovering, he said, "I look for an attack from the great enemy of my salvation, and I wish to be prepared for him. In this I must be conformed to my Lord." He sat for some time silent, obviously deeply engaged in internal struggles,—his hands clasped, and his eyes fixed. At last he exclaimed, with a force of which we did not think him at that time capable, "It is over; the conflict is over; and now for the song of victory: To him that loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood, and hath made me a king and a priest unto God, even the Father, be glory for ever: Amen."—It was heaven begun on earth.—"Now," said the expiring saint, "let thy servant depart in peace, for his eyes have seen thy salvation." His extremities now became benumbed,—the cold sweat of death settled on his temples,—his eyes began to swim,—his voice became inarticulate; yet even then was he heard gently to whisper repeatedly, "Precious Salvation." At last, without a groan or struggle, in the full possession of his rational faculties, in the confident belief of the truth, and in the joyful hope of glory, his happy spirit gently withdrew from its earthly tabernacle, and entered into the region of perfect souls.

"Calm was the moment, and serene,
Which all his sufferings clos'd:
No agony or struggle seen,
No feature discompos'd."

The recollection of the life and death of our ever to be valued friend, produces in me emotions both of joy and sorrow. O may I live his life, and die his death! "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace!"—I am, with Christian esteem,
Yours faithfully.

FINIS.



54.1.1.

